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1980

NME

EXPRESS

MUSICAL

NEW

THE FALL

SIMPLE MINDS

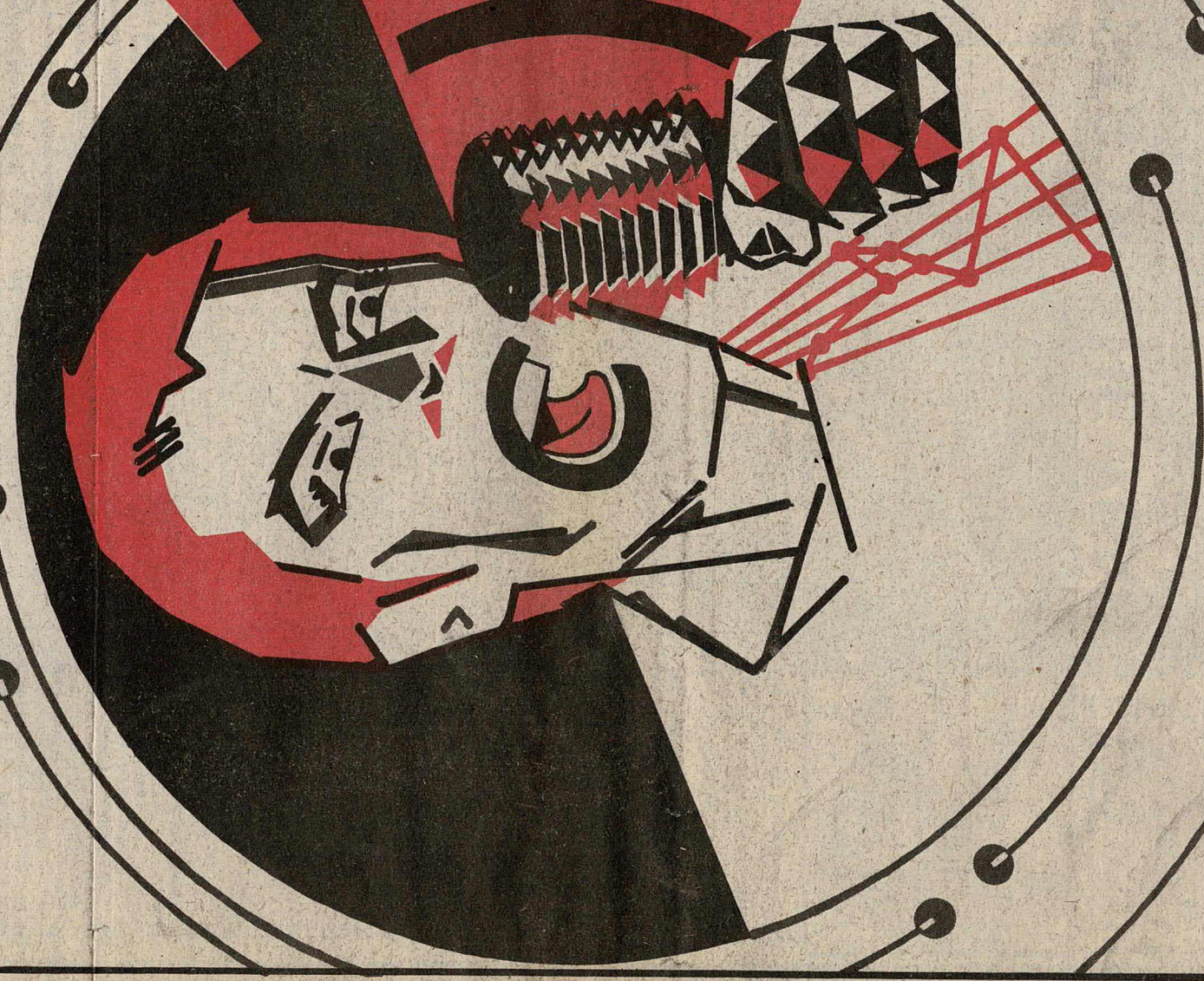
SYNTHESISED SOUND . . .

. . . 5 PAGE PULL-OUT STARTS

T-ZERS AWARDS

SILVEREST SCREENS OF '79

RAMONES ALBUM



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1979 CHART POINTS

Blondie triumphant

IT'S BEEN Blondie's year without any shadow of doubt. They emerge as No. 1 singles act of the year, after a neck-and-neck battle with Abba and Earth Wind & Fire — and they have the top album of 1979 with 'Parallel Lines', which registered a runaway victory, finishing almost 300 points ahead of its nearest rival. In fact, their winning LP total of 994 points was higher than last year's champion, the 'Saturday Night Fever' soundtrack. And they also figure at No. 27 with their follow-up 'Eat To The Beat'.

In many respects, 1979's record sales have been dominated by six acts, because — in addition to Blondie — ELO, Earth Wind & Fire, Abba, Chic and The Police appear in both albums and singles Top Ten. The Police (the only act with two elpees in the Top Twenty) and Gary Numan, are unquestionably the most successful chart newcomers of the year. Also worthy of mention are The Bee Gees (No. 6 album and 13th in the singles) and Supertramp, who rather surprisingly captured runner-up spot in the LP list with 'Breakfast In America'.

Altogether, 221 different albums figured in the NME Top Thirty during the last 12 months — ten more than last year. And it's intriguing to note that almost a quarter (54 to be precise) were compilation albums. Abba achieved the longest stay at No. 1 during 1979 — eight weeks (four with 'Voulez Vous' and four with 'Greatest Hits Vol. 2') — while Blondie and ELO were each in top spot for seven weeks, with 'Parallel Lines' and 'Discovery' respectively. Top compilation of the year was 'The Very Best Of Leo Sayer' (No. 9 in the table, topping the chart for four weeks), though the 'Best Disco Album In The World' set (in 15th place) had a similar month-long sojourn at the top of the chart.

Longest spell at No. 1 in the singles chart was the six-week run of 'Bright Eyes' by Art Garfunkel, but Village People, Blondie, The Boomtown Rats and Dr. Hook each occupied the top spot for four weeks. And it's significant that Blondie's winning points total of 623 is the lowest ever (last year, for instance, Boney M won with 864), showing just how close the competition was. Indeed, in 1978 the No. 4 placing amassed 681 points — 58 ahead of this year's winner! There were also slightly fewer acts in the Top Thirty throughout the year (194, three less than last time).

TOP 150 ALBUMS

1. PARALLEL LINES (Blondie) 994
2. BREAKFAST IN AMERICA (Supertramp) 703
3. DISCOVERY (Electric Light Orchestra) 667
4. Voulez Vous (Abba) 550
5. I Am (Earth, Wind & Fire) 520
6. Spirits Having Flown (The Bee Gees) 439
7. Replicas (Tubeway Army) 415
8. Manilow Magic (Barry Manilow) 411
9. C'Est Chic (Chic) 400
9. The Very Best Of Leo Sayer 400
9. Outlandos D'Amour (The Police) 400
12. Armed Forces (Elvis Costello) 388
13. Manifesto (Roxy Music) 381
14. Dire Straits 355
15. Best Disco In The World (Various Artists) 310
16. Regatta De Blanc (The Police) 306
17. Last The Whole Night Through (James Last) 299
18. Night Owl (Gerry Rafferty) 285
19. Barbra Streisand's Greatest Hits, Volume 2 278
20. Off The Wall (Michael Jackson) 275
21. The Best Of Earth Wind & Fire, Volume 1 259
22. Blondes Have More Fun (Rod Stewart) 257
23. Fate for Breakfast (Art Garfunkel) 254
24. Do It Yourself (Ian Dury & The Blockheads) 249
25. Communique (Dire Straits) 245
26. Equinoxe (Jean Michel Jarre) 240
27. Eat To The Beat (Blondie) 239
28. String Of Hits (The Shadows) 236
29. The Great Rock'n'Roll Swindle (The Sex Pistols) 231
30. Action Replay (Various Artists) 230
31. Street Life (The Crusaders) 225
32. Don't Walk Boogie (Various Artists) 222
33. Bridges (John Williams) 220
34. Wings Greatest 213
35. Marty Robbins Collection 211
36. Lena's Music Album (Lena Martell) 208
37. Tusk (Fleetwood Mac) 205
38. The Pleasure Principle (Gary Numan) 201
39. Out Of The Blue (Electric Light Orchestra) 199
40. In Through The Out Door (Led Zeppelin) 198
41. New Boots & Panties (Ian Dury & The Blockheads) 195
42. Grease (Soundtrack) 194
43. Black Rose (Thin Lizzy) 193
44. Abba Greatest Hits, Volume 2 190
44. Bat Out Of Hell (Meatloaf) 190
46. Greatest Hits (10cc) 187
47. Lodger (David Bowie) 185
47. 20 Greatest Hits (Three Degrees) 185
49. Down To Earth (Rainbow) 181
50. Showaddywaddy's Greatest Hits 1976-78 179
51. Neil Diamond's 20 Greatest Hits 177
52. The Long Run (The Eagles) 176
53. A Single Man (Elton John) 174
53. Slow Train Coming (Bob Dylan) 174
55. Rock'n'Roll Juvenile (Cliff Richard) 173
56. The Singles 1974-78 (The Carpenters) 169
57. Greatest Hits (Rod Stewart) 168
57. Live Killers (Queen) 168
57. Rock'n'Roll Disco (Various Artists) 168
60. Midnight Magic (The Commodores) 164
61. Night Flight To Venus (Boney M) 162
62. Country Life (Various Artists) 157
63. War Of The Worlds (Jeff Wayne) 156
64. Lion Heart (Kate Bush) 155
64. Oceans Of Fantasy (Boney M) 155
66. 52nd Street (Billy Joel) 152
67. Morning Dance (Spyro Gyra) 147
68. Thank You Very Much (Cliff Richard & The Shadows) 145
69. The Best Of The Dooleys 142
70. Back To The Egg (Wings) 136
71. 20 Golden Greats (Diana Ross) 134
72. The Specials 131
73. Some Product (The Sex Pistols) 130
74. At The Budokan (Bob Dylan) 116
75. Reach For It (Sky) 112
75. Tonic For The Troops (The Boomtown Rats) 112
77. The Billie Jo Spears Singles Album 107
78. The Raven (The Stranglers) 105
79. Feel No Fret (Average White Band) 104
80. Strangers In The Night (UFO) 103
81. Love Songs (Elvis Presley) 102
82. Even Now (Barry Manilow) 101
83. 20 Golden Greats (Mantovani) 100
84. Midnight Hustle (Various Artists) 97
85. Bad Girls (Donna Summer) 93
85. Whatever You Want (Status Quo) 93
87. This Is It (Various Artists) 91
88. Rickie Lee Jones 90
89. Highway To Hell (AC/DC) 88
89. Setting Sons (The Jam) 88
91. Out Of This World (The Moody Blues) 87
92. One Step Beyond (Madness) 85
93. Disco Inferno (Various Artists) 84
94. Desolation Angels (Bad Company) 81
94. You Don't Bring Me Flowers (Neil Diamond) 81
96. Incantations (Mike Oldfield) 79
97. Emotions (Various Artists) 78
98. Rust Never Sleeps (Neil Young) 75
99. Night Moves (Various Artists) 74
100. Country Portraits (Various Artists) 72
101. The Amazing Darts 64
101. Live X-Cert (The Stranglers) 64
101. The Secret Life Of Plants (Stevie Wonder) 64
104. ELO's Greatest Hits (Electric Light Orchestra) 63
105. The Undertones 59
106. A Monument To British Rock (Various Artists) 58
106. The Fine Art Of Surfacing (The Boomtown Rats) 58
108. The Adventures Of Hersham Boys (Sham 69) 56
109. 20 Songs Of Joy (Harry Secombe) 54
110. Exposed (Mike Oldfield) 52
110. The Incredible Shrinking Dickies (The Dickies) 52
110. The Wall (Pink Floyd) 52
113. Night Gallery (The Barron Knights) 48
114. Imperial Wizard (David Essex) 47
114. Turn To The Music (Players Association) 47
116. Sometimes You Win (Dr Hook) 44
117. Hi-Energy (Various Artists) 43
117. Jazz (Queen) 43
119. Bomber (Motorhead) 42
119. Go West (Village People) 42
121. Cruisin' (Village People) 41
121. Welcome To The Cruise (Judie Tzuke) 41
123. Livin' Inside Your Love (George Benson) 39
124. We Are Family (Sister Sledge) 38
125. Boogie Bus (Various Artists) 37
125. Unleashed In The East (Judas Priest) 37
127. Give 'Em Enough Rope (The Clash) 36
128. One Voice (Barry Manilow) 35
128. Van Halen II 35
130. On The Radio — Greatest Hits (Donna Summer) 34
131. Bee Gees' Greatest Hits 33
131. Mr Universe (Gillan) 33
131. TRB Two (Tom Robinson Band) 33
131. 20 Golden Greats (Doris Day) 33
135. Wet (Barbra Streisand) 32
136. Scared To Dance (The Skids) 31
137. Join Hands (Siouxsie & The Banshees) 30
137. 20 Golden Greats (The Beach Boys) 30
139. Public Image (Public Image Limited) 28
140. Crepes & Drapes (Showaddywaddy) 26
140. Survival (Bob Marley & The Wailers) 26
140. Tubeway Army 26
143. Risque (Chic) 24
144. Candy O (The Cars) 22
144. Greatest Hits (The Commodores) 22
146. Mark II Purple Singles (Deep Purple) 21
147. Backless (Eric Clapton) 17
147. Force Majeure (Tangerine Dream) 17
147. Knuckle Sandwich (Various Artists) 17
147. Peace In The Valley (Various Artists) 17
147. The Unrecorded Jasper Carrott 17

The Chart Points Tables are compiled from the singles and albums Top Thirty charts published weekly by NME. Every week throughout the year, points are awarded on the basis of 30 for a No. 1 placing, 29 for a No. 2 — and so on, down to one point for a No. 30 position. The resulting lists are a guide to chart consistency and popularity during the year — although, of course, they don't necessarily reflect actual sales figures.

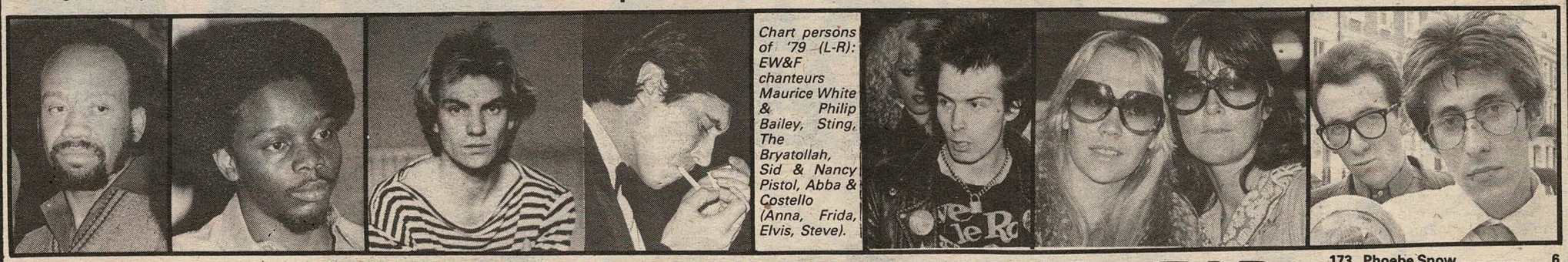


Chart persons of '79 (L-R): EW&F chanteurs Maurice White & Philip Bailey, Sting, The Bryatollah, Sid & Nancy Pistol, Abba & Costello (Anna, Frida, Elvis, Steve).

SINGLES ARTISTS OF THE YEAR

1. BLONDIE 623
2. ABBA 597
3. EARTH WIND & FIRE 572
4. Chic 521
5. Gary Numan and Tubeway Army 510
6. The Police 502
7. Electric Light Orchestra 427
8. Village People 405
9. The Sex Pistols 404
10. Boney M 376
11. Roxy Music 366
12. Squeeze 354
13. The Bee Gees 344
14. Ian Dury & The Blockheads 334
15. Racey 324
16. The Three Degrees 323
17. Art Garfunkel 303
18. Cliff Richard 281
19. Gloria Gaynor 280
19. Sister Sledge 280
21. The Shadows 275
22. The Boomtown Rats 273
23. Queen 271
24. Dr Hook 258
24. Amii Stewart 258
26. Edwin Starr 256
27. The Dooleys 252
28. The Commodores 248
29. The Jam 243
30. B A Robertson 241
31. Dollar 240
31. Michael Jackson 240
33. Dave Edmunds 227
34. M 224
35. The Specials 221
36. Elvis Costello 220
37. Supertramp 205
38. Lena Martell 202
38. Lene Lovich 202
40. Peaches & Herb 201

GARY NUMAN: highest placed newcomer.

41. The Gibson Brothers 200
42. Darts 194
43. Anita Ward 190
44. Kate Bush 176
45. Sad Cafe 170
46. The Real Thing 169
47. The Skids 165
48. The Bellamy Brothers 163
49. Donna Summer 162
51. Madness 160
52. Janet Kay 156
53. The Crusaders 148
54. Olivia Newton-John 147
55. Donna Summer & Barbra Streisand 146
56. The Jacksons 144
57. Status Quo 143
58. David Bowie 141
59. Gerry Rafferty 139
60. McFadden & Whitehead 136
61. Sparks 132
62. Wings 129
63. Dire Straits 127
63. Thin Lizzy 127
65. Fleetwood Mac 124
66. Sham 69 122
67. Gene Chandler 121
68. Leif Garrett 119
68. Quantum Jump 119
70. Driver 67 118
70. Eruption 118
70. Paul Evans 118
73. Billy Joel 115
74. Elton John 113
74. Kandidate 113
74. Rainbow 113
77. Gary's Gang 112
77. Rod Stewart 112
77. Randy Vanwarmer 112
80. Barry White 111
81. Frantique 109
81. Eddy Grant 109
83. Gary Moore 108
84. Kool & The Gang 106
85. The Flying Lizards 105
86. The Knack 101
87. The Beach Boys 99
88. Dr Feelgood 97
89. Erroll Dunkley 90
89. Dennis Brown 90
91. Milk & Honey 88
92. Suzi Quatro 87
93. Viola Wills 86
94. Chaka Khan 85
95. Nick Lowe 84
96. Patrick Hernandez 83
96. Players Association 83
98. The Clash 82
98. The Members 82
98. Barbra Streisand & Neil Diamond 82
101. Bill Lovelady 81
101. Spyro Gyra 81
103. Pink Floyd 80
104. The Selecter 79
105. The Ruts 78
106. Generation X 77
107. Neil Diamond 75
107. Hot Chocolate 75
109. Herb Alpert 74
110. Johnny Mathis 72
111. The Ramblers 71
112. The Isley Brothers 70
112. Showaddywaddy 70
112. Sugar Hill Gang 70
115. The Dickies 69
115. Secret Affair 69
117. Al Hudson 68
117. Joe Jackson 68
117. The Tourists 68
117. John Williams 68
121. The Barron Knights 67
122. Judie Tzuke 64
123. Tom Pace 62
124. Funkadelic 61
125. Sarah Brightman & Hot Gossip 60
125. Toto 60
127. Charlie Daniels Band 59
127. The Stranglers 59
129. Third World 58
130. The Korgis 57
131. Judas Priest 54
131. Sally Oldfield 54
133. Anne Murray 53
134. The Undertones 52
135. Slick 51
136. Chas & Dave 50
136. Matchbox 50
138. Gonzalez 49
139. Herbie Hancock 48
140. Dan Hartman 46
140. XTC 46
142. Rocky Sharpe & The Replays 45
143. Shalamar 44
143. Violinski 44
145. The Moody Blues 43
146. Rickie Lee Jones 38
147. Fiddlers Dram 34
148. John Travolta 33
149. Mankind 31
150. Meatloaf 28
150. Musique 28
152. The Cars 27
152. The Jags 27
154. Dynasty 26
155. Cats UK 25
156. Heatwave 24
157. The Monks 22
158. Rose Royce 21
159. Paul McCartney 20
160. Public Image Limited 18
161. Mike Oldfield 17
162. Dan I 16
163. Iris Williams 14
164. Elkie Brooks 13
165. Leo Sayer 12
166. Siouxsie & The Banshees 11
167. Instant Funk 10
168. George Benson 9
169. Linda Clifford 7
169. The Damned 7
169. The Doobie Brothers 7
169. Barry Manilow 7
173. The Beat 6
173. Buzzcocks 6
173. Me & You 6
173. Phoebe Snow 6
177. The Angelic Upstarts 5
177. Cheap Trick 5
177. Child 5
177. The Pointer Sisters 5
181. The Pretenders 4
181. Diana Ross 4
181. Bob Seger 4
181. UK Subs 4
181. Voyage 4
186. The Eagles 3
186. Fat Larry's Band 3
186. The Nolan Sisters 3
189. Lowrell 2
189. Tina Marie 2
189. The Olympic Runners 2
192. Kurtis Blow 1
192. GQ 1
192. Mick Jackson 1

COMPILATION NOTES

Gary Numan and **Tubeway Army** are combined (no.5), because Gary Numan IS Tubeway Army — on record, at any rate. **Wings** (62) and **Paul McCartney** (159) are shown separately, because the latter's Christmas record was ostensibly a solo effort. The same goes for **Michael Jackson** (31) and **The Jacksons** (56).

Neil Diamond figures in his own right (107), as well as in partnership with **Barbra Streisand** (98). Similarly, **Donna Summer** appears twice — on her own (49) and together with **Barbra Streisand** (55).

If we were to add their points together, **Michael Jackson** would be boosted to 10th position, **Donna Summer** to 17, **Neil Diamond** to 52 and **McCartney** to 53.

NEWS

Orchestral Manoeuvres plan new campaign

ORCHESTRAL Manoeuvres In The Dark have now set most of the dates for their first headlining tour which, as reported in our last issue, ties in with the February release of their second DinDisc single 'Red Frame, White Light' and debut album.

They visit Liverpool Eric's (February 15), Manchester Polytechnic (16), Huddersfield Polytechnic (19), Shrewsbury Cascade (20), Leeds Fan Club (21), Ormskirk Edgehill College (22), Dudley J.B.'s (23), Plymouth Clones (25), Exeter Routes (26), Portsmouth Polytechnic (28), London Southbank Polytechnic (29), Cromer West Runton Pavilion (March 1), Retford Porterhouse (7), Middlesbrough Rock Garden (8), Edinburgh Valentino's (9), Dundee Maryatt Hall (10), Aberdeen Ruffles (11), Glasgow College of Technology (12), Sheffield Limit Club (13), London Camden Electric Ballroom (14) and Liverpool University (15). A few more gigs have still to be confirmed.

Mekons mercy dash

FOLLOWING the release of their Virgin album 'The Quality Of Mercy Is Not Strnen', The Mekons are set to play a number of gigs commencing with one at Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic on January 11 and continuing at Canterbury College Of Art (17), Uxbridge Brunel University (18), Brighton Polytechnic (19), Manchester Polytechnic (25) and Norwich University of East Anglia (28). Further dates, including a London show, are yet to be confirmed.

Iggy Pop in full kinetic flight (c. N. Kent). Pic: Richard Brooks.

IGGY AT PALAIS

WITH a show at Portsmouth's Guildhall yet to be confirmed, MAM agency have announced seven definite dates for Iggy Pop's 1980 UK tour.

The Ig plays an opening gig at Newcastle City Hall on February 4 and then moves on to appear at Aberdeen Capitol (5), Edinburgh Odeon (6), Manchester Apollo (7), Birmingham Odeon (8), Bristol Locarno (10) and Hammersmith Palais (12).

Iggy will be part of a three-act package at these venues; the two remaining acts are unnamed as yet. Also not resolved at this stage is the exact line-up of Iggy's band, though it's believed that guitarist Ivan Kral, from the Patti Smith Group, and Klaus Krueger, ex-Tangerine Dream drummer, will be among those lending support.

Arista are lining up a new single and album to tie-in with Pop's visit. These tracks emanated from stormy sessions which took place at Rockfield in late summer '79, during which producer James Williamson quit the studio leaving Iggy to mix the album himself.

Tickets for the tour go on sale this Friday. Check at the respective venues for prices.

Mac-ack in May

THOUGH it has been widely rumoured that Fleetwood Mac are to play the Wembley Arena at the end of March as part of the band's projected Euro-tour, *NME* understands that the Mac are more likely to play five concerts at the Arena during yet unspecified dates in May. The band, who also hope to perform at two or three provincial venues, are currently set to appear in Japan before embarking on an Australian tour.

Stranglers nix Bombay

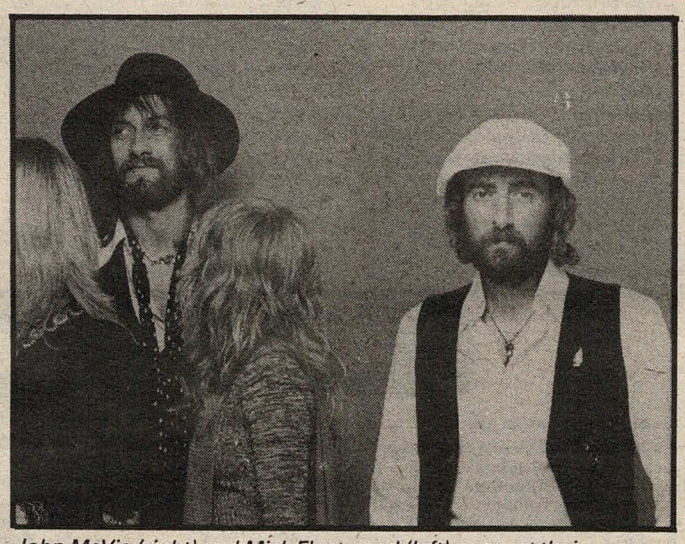
THE STRANGLERS, set to play a number of Indian concerts later this month, have now decided to postpone their trip until March in order to avoid any problems arising from the forthcoming elections in that country. Meanwhile, when pressed to disclose details of British dates during 1980, the band have stated that they are unlikely to indulge in a major UK tour, though a couple of one-off events could be in the offing.

Ash add

WISHBONE ASH have added a second London concert at the Hammersmith Odeon on Saturday, February 2, following a sell-out on tickets to their February 1 show. Tickets for the additional concert are now on sale, priced at £4.00, £3.50, £3.00 and £2.50.

A new single, taken from the band's forthcoming album 'Just Testing' is released by MCA this Friday (4). Titled 'Living Proof', the number was co-written by Laurie Wisefield and Claire Hamill, who provides back-up vocals on the disc. The B-side is a five-minute version of 'Jail Bait' culled from the import-only 'Live In Japan' album.

● THE SANDPIPER Music Machine, one of Nottingham's leading venues in recent years, closed on January 1, following a final New Year's Eve show featuring Art Failure. The venue, which has hosted shows by Buzzcocks, Stiff Little Fingers, Magazine, UK Subs, Members, The Human League, Gang Of Four, Ruts and many other bands has suffered from lack of support over the past few months.



John McVie (right) and Mick Fleetwood (left) re-enact their prize-winning impression of Chas and Dave.

Pointers, McGuinn visit

THE POINTER Sisters — June, Anita and Ruth — return to Britain in February to appear at Hammersmith Odeon on February 12, Portsmouth Guildhall (14) and Croydon Fairfield Hall (15). Tickets for all three concerts are now on sale priced £5.00, £4.00, £3.00 (for Hammersmith), £4.50, £4.00, £3.50 (for Portsmouth) and £5.00, £4.50, £4.00, £3.50 (for Croydon). Throughout their British engagements, the Pointers will be accompanied by their own band. These dates form part of a European tour which takes in concerts in Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Paris, Antwerp and The Hague.

● FORMER Byrds members Roger McGuinn and Chris Hillman arrive in London for a one-off concert at the Hammersmith Odeon on Wednesday, February 6, supported by American singer-songwriter Lee Clayton. Tickets, priced £4.50, £4.00, £3.50 and £2.50, are already available.

McGuinn and Hillman, together with Gene Clark, appeared at the London Venue only a few months ago, promoting their Capitol album 'McGuinn, Clark, Hillman'. However, at this stage it's not clear whether Clark will be playing on the forthcoming Hammersmith date.

Sundholm's second single

Roy Sundholm and his band have completed a new single for Ensign, 'Good Girls Don't Wear White,' produced by Undertones' producer Roger Becherian. Released later this month, the single will be promoted by a short British tour which includes the following gigs: London Marquee (January 7), Uxbridge Brunel University (9), Newcastle Polytechnic (11), Blackpool Norbreck Castle (12), Sheffield Limit Club (17), Middlesbrough Rock Garden (18), Huddersfield Polytechnic (19), Leicester Polytechnic (20) and London Marquee (21). The band then fly to the States for a lengthy tour.

Elvis hears the Jags single and enthuses. Pic: Anton Corbijn.

WHICH YEAR'S MODEL?

THOUGH Elvis Costello's latest album, produced in Holland by Nick Lowe, has been in the can for some time, no release date has yet been announced. The problem would appear to stem from WEA's recent acquisition of the Radar record label, to whom Costello was contracted. Meanwhile, a single, 'I Can't Stand Up For Falling Down' / 'Girl Talk', has a projected release date of January 11, though there is still doubt about the label upon which the disc will appear.

BJH two new signings

BARCLAY JAMES Harvest, recently cut down to a trio following Woolly Wolstenholme's departure to follow a solo career, have added two extra musicians for the forthcoming BJH tour. The two are Kevin McAlea (sax, keyboards and backing vocals), who previously toured with Kate Bush, and Colin Browne (keyboards, guitar, bass, backing vocals), a one-time member of Doctors of Madness.

Kansas City blues due

JAY McSHANN, the legendary Kansas City bluesman, plays a number of British dates this month, appearing at London's Pizza Express on January 8-13, 17-18, 22 and 26, and at the London Pizza On The Park on January 7, 14 and 21. In addition, McShann, whose band was one of the first to feature the talents of Charlie Parker, will be playing dates at Oldham Birch Hall Hotel (January 20), East Lancaster Jazz Society (24) and Stockport Warren Bulkeley Jazz Cellar (25).

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Body Snatchers. Pic: Neil Anderson.

Selecter date Body Snatchers

THE SELECTER have completed an album titled 'Too Much Pressure' which is released by 2-Tone on February 8 to link with a three-band package tour commencing in mid-February and continuing through the whole of March. Supporting The Selecter on the tour will be all-girl ska band The Body Snatchers, plus another band that has not yet been confirmed. A new Selecter single is planned for January 25, though no title has yet been decided upon.

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MOTORHEAD Overkill	£2.75
BOB DYLAN Slow Train Coming	£3.50
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PASH MUSIC STORES, 5a ELGIN CRESCENT, LONDON W11

Drummer quits Fire

AFTER THE FIRE have parted company with their drummer Ivor Twidell following his recent heart attack at an Edinburgh gig. The attack rendered him unconscious for 25 minutes but he was later pronounced fit enough to rejoin the band's nationwide tour. However, Twidell eventually threw in the towel following the band's Rainbow gig in November. His place will be taken by Nick Brotherwood, who filled in for Twidell during his illness and on the band's tour of Holland.

Buzzcocks 45 by 33

'SINGLES Going Steady', the album of Buzzcocks singles released by IRS in the States, is to appear on the UA label in Britain, probably in March. The album contains eight A and B-sides by the band and has been a big seller on import, thus prompting UA to provide the disc with a full British release. Meanwhile Buzzcocks are currently enjoying a lay-off following their three-week U.S. tour, though Pete Shelley is playing session gigs on John Cooper Clarke's latest album, which is being produced by Martin Hannett/Zero, who produced 'Spiral Scratch' before moving on to work with Joy Division, Magazine and others.

● ELLEN FOLEY, who recently headlined a London Hammersmith date with the Hunter-Ronson band, is expected to return to Britain in February for a series of dates. She is currently playing her first live U.S. tour.

● GINGER BAKER and The Energy appear at Colwyn Bay's Dixieland Show Bar on January 10, the venue's first rock date in over 12 months. Prices are set at £1.50 in advance or £2.00 on the door.

● SHAKIN' Stevens commences a short series of dates at the end of February, opening at Slough Fulcrum Theatre on February 22, then playing Great Yarmouth Hippodrome (24), Hatfield Forum Theatre (March 8), Birmingham Town Hall (11), Oxford Polytechnic (14) and London Music Machine (15). Stevens' latest single, 'Take On', produced by Mike Hurst, is released this Friday, while an album entitled 'Hot Dog', should be around to coincide with the tour.

● POINTED STICKS, the Vancouver-based outfit whose initial Stiff single 'Out Of Luck' was produced by Brinsley Schwarz, are heading for Britain to play three London dates — at Dingwalls (January 10),, Nashville (11) and Electric Ballroom (12), plus one at Uxbridge's Brunel University (13). A five-piece band with a drummer named Dimwit, Pointed Sticks will shortly be recording a new album with Police producer Nigel Grey. It will be released in April to coincide with a full European tour by the band.

● RENAISSANCE headline another short concert series, starting later this month, to add to those they played during the first half of December. They visit Loughborough University (January 25), Colchester Essex University (26), Cardiff University (February 1), St. Austell New Cornish Riviera (7), Southampton University (8) and Folkestone Leas Cliff Hall (9). A London date is likely to follow.

● ANNE Nightingale is to present a new Radio One rock show this Friday (4) commencing at 7.30 pm and running through to 9.50 pm. Kid Jensen's *Roundtable* will be heard 45 minutes earlier, at 5.45 pm. There will also be renewed emphasis on rock via a new expanded 3½ hour *Rock On Saturday* show, which will combine the present *Rock On* magazine features and the long-running *In Concert* series.

RECORD NEWS

● Torch Records, the South London based label, are putting out two EPs and a single on January 11. The EPs are **The Sounds'** 'Physical World' and **Scissor Fits'** 'Soon After Dark', while the single, by **The Directions,** is titled "Three Bands Tonight'.
● Planned album releases from EMI include offerings from **Kevin Ayers, Roy Harper, The Misdemeanors, Iron Maiden, Aviator, Cockney Rejects** and **Eberhard Schoener,** plus a heavy metal compilation titled 'Metal For Muthas'. *(Can you get me one, son? — Max Bell's Mutha.)*
● **Ronnie Hawkins'** latest album 'The Hawk' is to be released by Liberty United later this month. The album reunites Hawkins with former Hawks keyboardist Garth Hudson, while Paul Buttefeld and James Burton are also featured on the disc.
● Highly-regarded New Jersey band **The Feelies** have an album, 'Craxy Rhythm', due out on Stiff during February. As a promotion gimmick, Stiff have released a flexi-disc in a limited edition of 5,000 copies containing tracks from the album. Punters can obtain this disc almost free — a postal order for 30 pence is required to cover postage and packing — from Stiff's H.Q. at 9-11 Woodfield Road, London W.9.
● **The Revillos'** single 'Motor Bike Beat'/'No Such Luck' gets a January 11 release by Dindisc, while an album from Reynolds, Fife and Co. is slated for March. Also on the Dindisc schedule for early 1980 is 'Echo Beach', a single from Canadian band **Martha And The Muffins,** which should be with us on January 25; 'Temporary Thing', a single by Memphis session band **Slinky and The Ephs,** which comes out on February 22; and a March album by **The Monochrome Set,** who have been working with producer Bob Sergeant. Meanwhile **The Name,** another recent Dindisc signing, are still seeking a producer for their debut offering.
● Hot San Francisco act **Pearl Harbour and The Explosions** have signed with Warner Bros. and have an album called 'Drivin' due out in February. Fronted by one Pearl E. Gates, The Explosions had a regional hit for 415 Records before Warner and his relatives arrived contract-in-hand.
● The new **Brainiac 5** single 'Working'/'Feel' is released on the Roche label on January 11. The disc, which is available through Rough Trade and other independent outlets was produced by ex-Hawklord Martin Griffin.

Martha & The Muffins.

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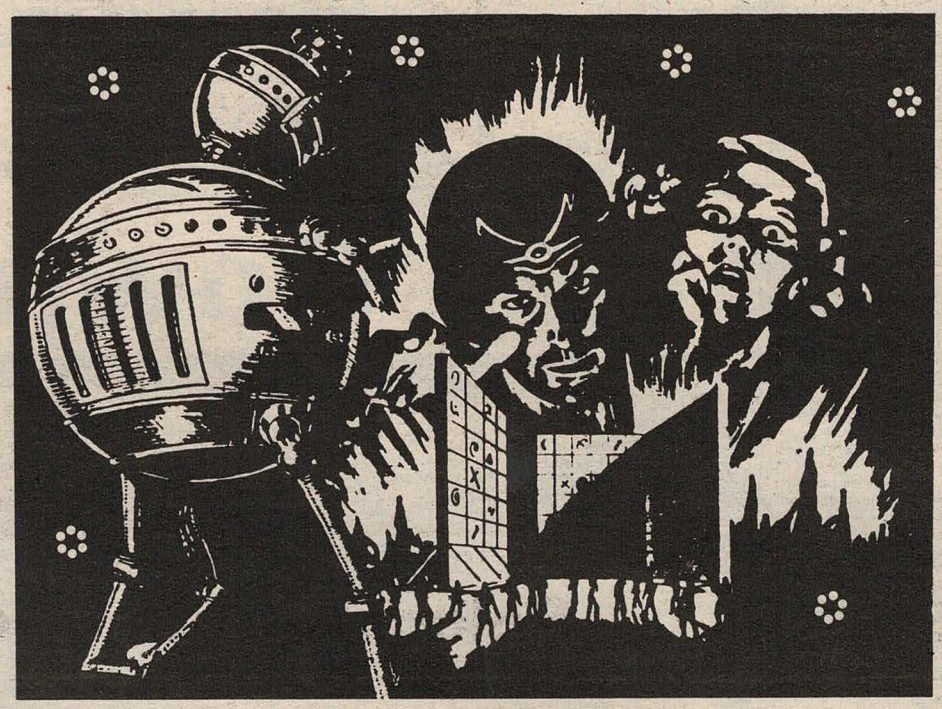
The T-ZERS Awards



LAST YEAR'S THINGS

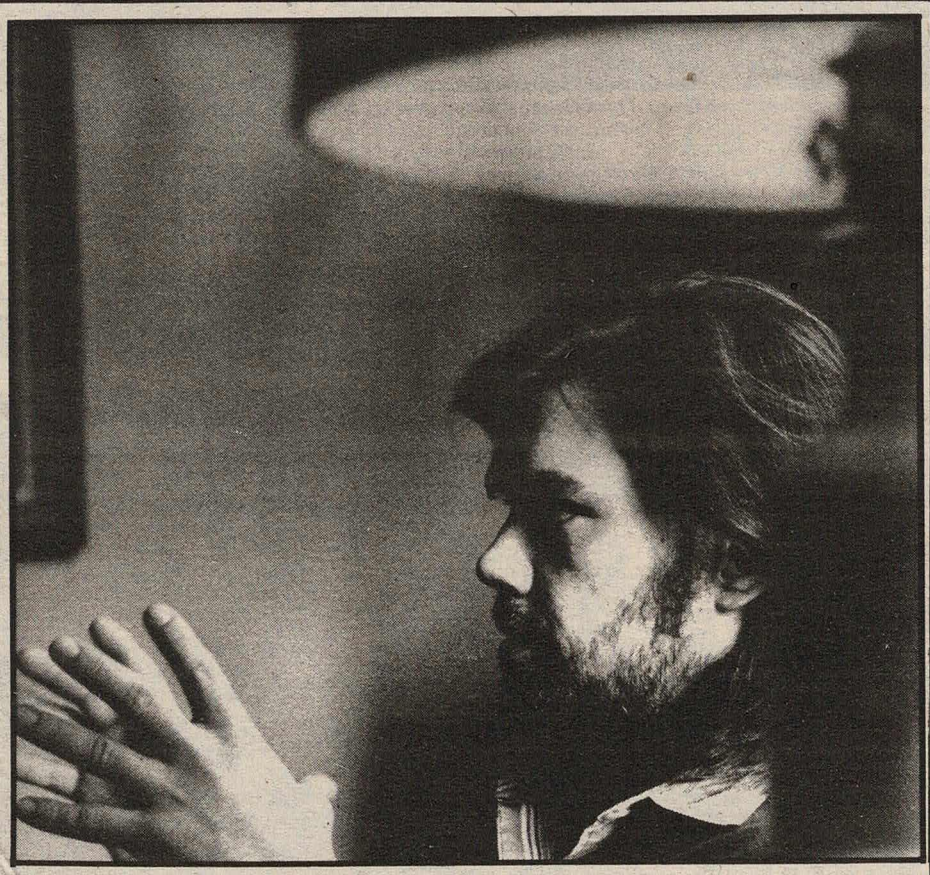
Johnson & Johnson
Space Invaders
Moles
Revivalism
Knebworth
Salvation
The Pope
'Nam movies
Gang movies
The New Barbarians
DC-10s
Picture discs
12" singles
Mods
Hitch-Hikers Guide To The Galaxy
The working class
The '80s
The '60s
Sociology
The '50s
School meals
Jobs
Vampires
Rock against Anything
Rhodesia
Roller disco
Digital watches
De-evolution
Exegesis
New albums by Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd, Eagles, Fleetwood Mac

NEXT YEAR'S THINGS

Performance art
Non-sexist haircuts
Videotape
Beatniks
Glam rock
The new underground
Apocalypse
Neo-medievalism
George Orwell
Badgers
The '70s
Floods
Earthquakes
Thermo-skyships
Gnosticism
Total collapse of Western civilisation
CB radio
Acid
Bouffants
Miniskirts
Zimbabwe
Disasters
Chappaquiddick
The Olympics
'Invisible' synthesisers
Geiger counters
New albums by John Lennon, Bruce Springsteen, Rolling Stones

R.I.P.

ABC Records
The Adverts
Richard Beckinsale
Dorsey Burnette
Zenon De Fleur
Rick Gaberson (The Bizarros)
Lowell George
Donny Hathaway
Bob Luman
Claudie Massop
Van McCoy
Jimmy McCulloch
Charlie Mingus
Gordon Parks
Mike Patto
Blair Peach
Penetration
Vernon Presley
Radar Records
Nicholas Ray
Rich Kids
Minnie Riperton
Tom Robinson Band
Richard Rogers
Jean Seberg
Sid Vicious
John Wayne
11 Who fans
X-Ray Spex



Lowell George — found dead 30.6.79 in an Arlington, Virginia hotel room. Pic: Michael Putland.

● The Steve Marriott My Soul Is White But My Bank Account Is Black Award to **Madness** and **The Blues Brothers.**

● The first annual Bob Geldof Finger In Both Pies And See Which One Goes Cold First Award to **Jimmy Pursey** for appearances on both *Arena* and *Star Games,* as well as *OGWT* and *TOTP.*

● The Clive Dunn, Benny Hill, Rolf Harris, Little Jimmy Osmond and Wings Christmas Always Means Turkey Award to **Pink Floyd.**

● The Anthony Blunt Who Is The Fourth Man Political Honour to **Topper Headon.**

● The first annual Mae West Is That A Gun In Your Pocket Or Are You Just Pleased To See Me Award to **Anita Pallenberg.**

● The Robert Duvall Charlie Don't Surf Award to **The Beach Boys.**

● The first annual Joan Collins Life Begins At Fifty Award to **Vi Subversa** of Poison Girls.

● The first annual British Bulldog When I Make A Decision I Stick To It Award to **Jimmy Pursey.**

● The first annual Ron Wood Wot Me Worry I've Got My Own Flop Album To Promote Award to **Gary Moore.**

● The second annual Johnny Rotten Fastest Rat Off A Sinking Ship Award goes jointly to **Chaz Jankel** and **Gary Moore,** plus whoever it was that quit Liouxpie & The Bullshits.

● The fifth annual Mick Farren Drunk And Disorderly Award to **Guy Stevens.**

● The Bo Diddley 500% More Man Award to **Rod Stewart**

● The fifth annual Golden Phone PR Of The Year Award to **Mick Houghton.**

● The first annual Maggie May Blame Me I Voted Conservative Award to **Jimmy Page.**

● The first annual Pierre Cardin Good Taste Is Timeless Inscribed Toby Jug to **Dr. Feelgood.**

● The first annual Gene Kelly / Fred Astaire Memorial Tap Shoe to **Chic, EWF** and **The Jacksons** for the most memorable dance music of the year.

● The fourth annual Country Joe McDonald I Fought The System And The System Won Award to **Chuck Berry** and **Jerry Lee Lewis,** still outlaws after all these years . . .

● The fourth annual Tammy Wynette Stand By Your Man Award to **Bianca Jagger** and **Danny Kustow.**

● The fourth annual Bermuda Triangle Sunk Without Trace Award to **Radar Records.**

● The third annual Bob Geldof I Can't Stop Talking Award (formerly the Marc Bolan Silver Saliva Award and the Steve Harley ghty Mouth Award) to **Ian Page.**

● The third annual Pete Townshend 'I'm A Face' Brighton Pier 1965 Award (previous winners: Paul Weller and Paul Weller) to **Gary Crowley.**

● The second annual Don Revie Didn't Quit Till The Job Was Done Either Award to **The Adverts** and **TRB.**

● The first annual Tommy Cooper Not Like That Like This Award to **Nina Hagen** for giving masturbation lessons over Austrian TV.

● The George Orwell Down And Out In Paris And London Dog-eared Penguin to **Malcolm McLaren.**

● The fifth annual Vasco De Gama Touring Prize awarded jointly to **XTC** and **Pope John Paul II.**

● The first annual Rory Gallagher Concerts Are My Lifeblood Award to **Public Image Ltd.**

● The fifth annual Faces 'Overture And Beginners' Thanks For The Live Album But You Needn't Have Bothered Award to **Bob Dylan** for 'Budokan,' and **Judas Priest** for 'Unleased In The Easht' *(There musht be shome mishtake here — Neil Spencer).*

● The first annual Keith Richard Dental Care award to **Joe** 'Gums On The Roof' **Strummer** and **Jerry** 'Coventry Gap' **Dammers** of The Specials.

● The first annual Ray Davies Celluloid Heroes Award to **Phil Daniels** and **Sting.**

● The first annual I Ching The Superior Man Knoweth When To Speaketh And When To Shutteth Up Award to **Elvis Costello.**

● The Bob Harris 'What New Wave? Where?' Bondage Trousers to *Rolling Stone* magazine.

● The third annual Bill Grundy Must We Fling This Filth At Our Pop Kids Award for 'incisive' rock writing to **Roy Kerridge,** contributor to *The Spectator* and *The Daily Telegraph.*

● The first annual Delaney And Bonnie Session Superstars Award to **Glen Matlock, Budgie, Brian James** and **Mickey Gallagher.**

● The first annual Katherine Mansfield I Just Wanna Hear Girls Talk Award to **The Slits, The Raincoats** and **Annette Peacock.**

● The first annual John Betjeman By Dem Poem You Shall Know 'Em Hand-tooled Leather Bookmark to **Linton Kwesi Johnson.**

● The fifth annual Dr. Barnardo's Award For Trying To Find A Good Home For Mick Ronson (previous winners: Ian Hunter, Bob Dylan, Roger McGuinn, Philip Rambow, Rich Kids, Dead Fingers Talk) shared by **Ellen Foley** and — once again — **Ian 'Untah.**

● The second annual Ernie Wise You Can't See The Join Award to **Joe Jackson.**

● The first annual Stiff Records Reversing Into Tomorrow Award to **Mrs. Thatcher, Ayatollah Khomeini** and **Mods** everywhere.

● The Mr. Spock Memorial Soldering Iron For Contributions To Science to **Human League, Orchestral Manoeuvres** and **Throbbing Gristle,** with a special appearance by **Gary Numan** as K-9.

● The Arthur Brown God Of Hellfire Singed Hairshirt to **Bob Dylan.**

● The first annual Van Johnson 76 Trombones platinum mouthpiece to **Rico.**

● The RCA Records Jim Reeves, Glen Miller And Elvis Presley Worth More Dead Than Alive Trophy to **Sid Vicious.**

All Fall Down

By Ian Penman **Pix: Anton Corbijn**

JUST ABOVE my typewriter on the mantlepiece is an eye-catching tube of 10 orange flavoured effervescent tablets. Each tablet contains 1g orange flavoured concentrated Vitamin C, or, more exactly, '1g ascorbic acid BP (Vitamin C) and flavouring'.

The trade mark is *Redoxon:* these tablets were *Made in Switzerland for Roche Products Limited Welwyn Garden City England.*

Earlier this year, Mark Smith added an "ouch!" to Roche and The Fall released a single, with one side called 'Rowche Rumble'.

"The doctors need prescriptions / The wives need the pills / for Rowche Rumble."

The Roche pharmaceutical company are also into the manufacture of 'anti-depressants', you see. I'm told they're the biggest in their field.

And I'm not sniffling anymore.

So it goes.

HERE WE are again with the problems of producing music, hearing music and writing about same.

Here we are again with The Fall, and the problems of writing about their particular point of production. Here you are: not the definitive article.

"With print you substitute an ear for an extra useless eye."

Here we go round the rocky music business, trying hard to distinguish between 'it' as an institution — looming large and obviously in our day-to-days — and its events: when 'it' happens and what we think.

"Do all these musicians have a social conscience? / Only in their front rooms."

Hear we the rock and rockier roles of the interview again? Time to quote Samuel Beckett, maybe: *"Starting from a given theme their minds laboured in unison. They had no conversation properly speaking."* Throw in a bit of Burroughs, just for good measure? Well, it is The Fall we're listening to: *". . . grey and spectral and anonymous, they don't see him and think it is their own mind humming the tune."*

Is this, in short, another branch on the tree of showbusiness?

Smith's voice of Fall answered. The weight of the dreary grey matter fell on his shoulders, fallen from on high, through a checkerwork of starry, showy leaves. And the Fall's voice, though distorted and begrudged, tidied and reviewed, began to make sense.

I sat down and I heard. The tape spools went around and around and we whistled in the dark, went off for an evening's drinking, smashed some mirrors and sped home to some *Roche.*

This white crap, this Fall, do indeed talk back. Up in their North, there is no shining EXIT sign; no chips in the wage packet. Another dusty Autumn, another loving Winter, another . . . The Fall. Five times Fall. Times various signs. Signatures, in fact, of those things I am here hopefully to cross through if not out. Falling through a very short space of time, through times of haste. On. Over the printed furrows; our face in creases.

Quite an expressionless face. But at the same time such an arrogant one. Hard to ignore, very hard in fact. But then, most people only know this face's publicity, not its endearing turns. Nor its vulnerability.

And here issues forth a description, though I must say I am continually quizzing myself — and others do it for me, also — as to the relative worth of (such) description.

This has recently come close to putting me off altogether. Pressured into explaining, describing, listing, transcribing, putting oneself at the centre of, bemoaning, becoming, being. Bored. Oh, to rise above mortality, this scuzzy business of employment, or rather, of being employed in the busy business of enjoyment. Up, up and away into the urbane reality of the written and how it is 'actually' read.

Listen. You hear? On the one hand, a proposition such as The Fall, on the other such doleful music press hacks and cultural consumerist quacks as practice little more than daily breadwinning, more concerned with the width of a riff than the quality of language. Eat your peanut butter boogie, go on, I don't care.

Ach, but I do! *"But I push push push push / Roll the bones and the poison dice / No time for small moralists."* Or smug, ex-Art

Another kind of Northern thing. The Fall l. to r. Steve Hanley, Mark Smith, Craig Scanlan, Mike Leigh, Marc Riley.

minimalists. Or furry socialists. Or matching mods. For the rest . . . . let hear / see who will. Behind you, always, perhaps, some . . . . *"The old golden savages / Killed their philosophers / Their thoughts brought the drought about / (Something followed me out)."* In other words . . . .

The conversation at this party is always so choc full of Old Age Popsters: a conversation in cold storage, "still the spirit of '68," as sez PiL, same old anecdotes, dozey notes padding around and around and around and around. Same home movies, week after week, and they don't even move, that's the worst thing. Same scenes, same dialogue, same ways of seeing the world: interview, meeting place, watering hotel, etc. Popster script writer meets Popster singer songer fax info gee you don't say . . . . very much . . . do . . you?

"I used to believe everything I read / But that's all changed / Now I'm stepping out."

Maybe we'll actually get rid of the '60s in the '80s.

"DETECTIVE vs. Rector (possessed by Spectre) / Spectre blows him against the wall. Says:/'Die wretch this is your fall I've waited / Since Cacsar for this. Damn Latin my / hate is crisp I'll rip your fat body!."

There could be displaced themes in that. My interpretations could be along the lines of: the "Detective" stands for an investigative, empirical world view; i.e., a journalistic approach, wherein asking a question and that question answered is a process which automatically signifies the 'truth' about the proposition being dealt with: print and digest: don't digress.

The "Detective" / journalist has its place in contemporary mythology: hard bitten existential hero: independent, ethical, alone, cynical. But, obviously, it relies entirely upon other people's private life to make a 'living'. The fabled 'romance' of this occupation is a hollow one, especially when you work for multi-national corporations and not in Philip Marlowe's office.

"Rector possessed by Spectre" is musical space, potentially in the grasp of innovation. "Damn Latin" is journalese, a decrepit kind of linguistic communication only kept alive in certain inward-looking, backward-thinking, self-righteous establishments.

"Spectre vs. Rector start one. The Rector lived in Hampshire. A spectre was from Chorazina. Evil dust in the air. The Rector locked his door."

This is my Fall . . . .

NOT THE Fall located purely, obstinately within rockin' role's 'natural' ideological scheme of things, which is endlessly traditional, a practice that works only within the limits of some loosely assembled "reality" — not what 'ought to be', only 'what is'. The specific activity of most journalism being not an adjustment to a perceived equilibrium, but the maintenance of existing equilibrium within a set traditional framework . . . . *"Swedish singers / With D.L.T. / The energy vampires / More hands on the tranquilisers / Unholy alliance / Jokes about rape / Fog bound roads / South African heroes."* . . . . a static, immobile "reality"; rather than a relation of forces in continuous motion and shift.

Right. I've over used my words. Thus to pieces of conversation. Convention. Interests directed toward musical production that necessarily include pertinent categories of knowledge.

Right. I've cluttered that up. Thus to people in the conversation. Five Falls and a manager: six, like dice. Some people have been 'in' The Fall longer than others, but only in an extremely formal sense is there a 'new lineup'. Following the departure of Martin Bramah and Yvonne Pawlett, The Fall could be seen to consist of: Craig Scanlan (18 years old): electric guitars, left-handedly. Marc Riley (17 years old): electric guitars from bass ones. Steve Hanley (18 years old): bass guitars, few words. Mark E Smith (22 years old): words, voices, shouting, taping, playing tapes, kazoo blowing, the dirtying of coats. Mike Leigh (23 years old): drumming from bouncing. Kay Carroll (age not known): keeps managing.

Right. Start talk. Futures and pasts. Last band, to this. Last first, Smith?

"It was too fussy, music *and* relationships. That Lyceum gig" — the supposed 'Gig of the Century' with Fall, Human League, Gang of Four, Mekons, Stiff Little Fingers — "I could see it going then, a definite split. Martin was on a different road. Mike was like the strength we needed, we always needed. When Karl (Burns, ex-drums) left and I wanted Mike in there was a lot of opposition, 'cos Mike doesn't play conventionally, he *plays* his drums, he doesn't knock shit out of them.

"Then we had the six piece (Pawlett still on keys) which didn't really work either, but it was a considerable improvement. The night it came together was at a recent Marquee gig —

"These new bands are a disgrace. Elvis never put lyric sheets in with his albums, he mumbled words."

...THE ONLY ONES...

TROUBLE IN THE WORLD New Single OUT NEXT WEEK

CBS

"Kids who work in a shop for £80 a week say 'you're a sell out' and you're on 20 notes a week."

tension pulls out the best in us — like, we expected Yvonne to play that night but she didn't turn up. We just got on with it. 'Dragnet' was recorded — in a few days — a week after Yvonne left, and all but two of the 11 tracks were written after Martin had left: playing what someone else wrote can get so stale.

"The band was attracting a lot of elitists, a lot of Eno-orientated crapheads, but with Yvonne going that was the last of it."

The servicing of fashion-adaptable mythology is preffered to the deconstruction of popular ideology. Myth-making constantly takes over and over takes ideas, which are vulgarised into a kind of hush puppy 'public philosophy': vistas of common sense argument.

A sediment: the metronome of trends setting sameness: the endless repetition of identical forms: a so called 'mass culture'.

Criticism is usually aimed at fixing *a* meaning, finding *a* source: an ending, a closure. Such pop(ular) 'fun' lacks edge, open spaces. Knowledge is still considered out of bounds, the spotlight still works and you still have to work in its glare, do what you can. Smith?

"Lenny Bruce used to do it really well, just start chatting and—"

But didn't he have *help?*

"Methedrine! Ha ha! No, you can't pin it all on that. He just kept on talking. That's what I'm trying to do. I'm not trying to be Lenny Bruce, but trying to get more things in like that, jokes . . . like, lots of people can't always hear the lyrics, and there's a lot of options on the stage and they're not used. That's what I thought was good about Bruce, the way he used to insult his audience almost. You get these 'New Wave' bands: *This is our new single, singalong!* You know, they build their own traps!"

What about larger audiences, less intimacy and suchlike?

"They vary like any other audience. Like the Lyceum was *one* big audience: that was like a ritual. There's nothing better than playing to 30 or 40 people. When we did Derby there was about 14 people, and that was great. Then we played Belle Vue with the Buzzcocks to 4,000."

How was the audience at that 'Science Fiction Festival', Leeds, earlier this year?

"That was one tenth of an audience: the rest were watching Hawkwind's gear being set up ha ha! We were the only band who did something different with each song, the others were: *brrr-stop-clap-thankyou.* It was like that Lyceum gig, with all those bands . . . . I thought I felt some kind of kinship with them. It was such a turning point.

"The Fall sound was a bit different, it was fussy, it was sloppy, it was just starting to come together, people weren't liking it, which was okey dokey. But the other bands were not supporting us, they didn't go on after and say anything, it was. 'Nobody throw cans at *us!*' The Human League were the nearest, which surprised me, they had a whole lot of guts. The rest . . . .

"The rest were just: *HERE WE GO LADS 1-2-3-4!!!*"

White crap . . . ?

"The *'White crap that talks back'* thing was due to people in London being told that people in the North are thick, or warm, friendly people. A lot of bands masquerade, pretend that they're the 'Northern thing'. They don't expect people like us to come out with what we do. We're a 'Manchester' band, but we're not The Smirks or Slaughter and The Dogs, spineless bands who just want to get up on that stage. It goes right back to The Hollies, Herman's Hermits. I mean, nobody takes people like Slaughter and The Dogs seriously: beergut and peroxide and *"wock'n'woll"* and coming on all mean ha ha!

"Like Gary Bushell or whoever must have a really hard time interviewing all these bands who have nothing to say. *"Wayne stared into space and said, 'The Fall is the sort of music you play to fridges.' . . . ."* Ha ha!

"We've had white crap in this band: breadheads. I mean, like, everybody screaming *"It's the record companies, it's the journalists, they're screwing us."* But it's not, it's the fucking musicians! If they withdrew none of that could function. It's only 'cos they keep making compromises: they think they're worth it.

"We're neither white crap, nor like *"We're talking about Art here, aren't we?"* 'Witch Trials' was like a statement of that."

"When I was at the Witch Trials of the 20th Century they said: You are white crap. You are an aesthetic anaesthetic. Your repetition will never be accepted."

The Fall, by default or design, have always worked outside the prim and proper safety zones of "listenability", standard rock 'n' roll transparency, unsettling the underpinnings of normal critical logic. Their 'difference' refuses to be tied down, typecast, exhaustively detailed. This is as should be.

All that can be expected of their practice, their presence, are persistent signs of distance, resistance, abrasiveness. The protocall of entertainment ridiculed. Their unremarkableness is striking. Don't *rely* upon them. (What for?)

So good, so awful: so what? So the notion of a flat structure of beaty representations operated by or through starry transcendent consciousnesses is thereby replaced by one of productivity: everyone has their 'part to play'. And the 'subject' is . . . . you.

SMITH?

"The Fall is an institution. It's my life, but I'm not The Fall. This band, now, threatens me, which is how it should have been all along. This is great, this is the first Fall where I can drop out and not feel embarrassed about it. That's the reason I've always stuck with it. I didn't want some other fucker to mess it all up, what I'd done or half done. Like the Sex Pistols name was dragged through the sewage — and I wouldn't want that for The Fall.

"The Fall defies logic. Our past defies logic. A threat: The Fall is a threat. Like, I write to all these bands, small bands, have done for about a year and a bit. I get to know these bands: their first record, so on, loads of them, Echo, Teardrop, they were all part of the Fall thing at one point. They get approached by A&R men and they're always chatted up very nicely — which is like we used to get it, but I always frightened them off, they were all so scared off by our attitude which was obviously not very together — and you get these young bands saying: *We said we were into The Fall and they hated that.* They really despise us, which is disgusting, that grasp of power they've got.

"We influenced a hell of a lot of bands. Everybody thought we were just a journalist's dream, but we're not. As long as you keep on *going* . . . .

I listen to The Residents, Kim Fowley, and they sell even less than us. It's a crazy set up. Sales figures are so . . . I'm amazed by the difference between us and someone like The Police and Squeeze. We did 10,000 and Squeeze did 500,000. The Ruts do 100,000. I mean, 10,000 is *a lot* to me, it scares me! We don't take out ads though: who wants to be a flash in the pan for a couple of weeks?

Mark Smith: The New Wave's answer to Lenny Bruce and William Burroughs?

Or just another branch on the tree of showbusiness?

"It's amazing the effect the press has. I've seen bands crying over reviews, like their whole life was destroyed. Some of my favourite reviews are bad ones!

"It's stupid that someone can say 'It's not rock 'n' roll' — which is the only reason the medium exists, the reason I got into it: because there are allowances. It's beautiful and that's why it's so sad that it's abused, that people start laying down lines about what is and isn't. It's like YOUR rag, like I said to you: you get the front cover . . . . SO WHAT? If it's The Fall, if it's a bigger thing, it'll still be behind QUEEN TO TOUR, because 'PEOPLE WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THAT' — even though the *NME* slags those fuckers off left, right and centre."

There are alternatives, of course. Some less oblique than others.

"People like us," sez Smith.

"There's no room for people like us. Like at this point we make a sub standard living out of it. It's another system. All the money we make, we make ourselves, it's not record company advances. Kids say *You're alright now, I saw your picture last week: you must be rolling in it* . . . These kids who work for £80 a week in a bloody shop, y'know, they're saying 'You're a fucking sell out', and you're on like twenty notes a week!

"Big star now are you? We took the fucking chance. That's why we ditched that 'Free Tour' thing with Here & Now: playing to these kids and you haven't eaten for two days, these kids with *brandies!* Which comes back to what I was saying before about lyric sheets and so on: *don't try too hard.* Which is why it's all going so bad. Even the 'New Wave' just offers so much on a plate: quick chorus repeated 20 times? The old bands never done that — and these are the shits who turn round and say *Elvis is dead Hooray!*, and slag off The Beatles. Elvis didn't put *lyric sheets* in with his albums, he used to mumble words . . . .

"It amazes me Ian that we're so revered, 'cos we're . . . These new bands are a disgrace, and we're bone idle for that system's point of view. The fact that we do stand out frightens me. We do gigs where we just run through them 'cos we're too pissed, and people think it's the greatest thing to hit there for ages. *We shouldn't be special!*

"People say why don't you have the success, and I think, well, you look at someone like Pursey — he's really an unhappy person, he *knows* what he's doing is shit. You meet all these people who know what they're doing is shit, you know it in your heart, you know what's good and bad. I spit on people like that . . . ."

"They stay with the masses / Don't take any chances / End up emptying ashtrays . . . ./ Where are you people going? / Is this a branch on the tree of showbusiness?"

There is advice of course.

"No, anything you need you've got to fight for, don't get given anything — the punch that puts in a band. And someone like Virgin will wipe that out with white vinyl. They especially seem to epitomise that kind of cushy socialism — and bands agree to that, no matter what they say afterwards: *So long as it doesn't mess up the sound . . . . We didn't know it was going to happen.* A lot of records you listen to these days are just effects, it must have taken days to smooth out.

"The Fall is a different news altogether from that."

"OH! BRRR! Grrr — The poor fellow covers his face with his hands and almost tears his eyes out with vicious rubbing. For even as he spoke a dust devil suddenly arose and struck him. His mouth is filled. He spits some out, but swallows more. His eyes are blinded. Poor wretch! In a day or two he will be in hospital, with that terrible ocular disease brought on by the glaring sun and the deadly dust.

— from *Cassell's Illustrated History of the Boer War*

That was the bit where we normally talk about 'influences', by the way.

DOCTOR SMITH is talking about his infamous theory of 'Underground Medicine'.

"My medicine is as good as anyone else's. I think Dean Martin and William Burroughs had the same viewpoint. Dean Martin said it: *It must be really hard for a tee totaller to get up in the morning and know that's the best they're going to feel all day!!* Drug casualties and drink casualties are usually people who do it steadily, they get into a rut about it, it's like eating meals and they just go down the drain. *I've got a big beer gut!* You know, you can get into that same thing with drugs: using drugs as a Barclaycard."

Kay is getting a word in edgeways — because she couldn't hit it sideways — and talking about the song she wrote, when pissed, 'Muzorewi's Daughter'.

"I hated him. He was so white, but he was black: he was playing Uncle Tom. This was like a first impression, a naive viewpoint. If you're Muzorewi's Daughter life's a bit of a lie, isn't it? Everything she'll see is like, potentially a threat."

A similar song, as yet unrecorded, is called 'Cary Grant's Wedding'.

"Days of booze and roses / Shine on us free us all / who is not irritable / He is no genius!"

"YOU GET kids asking for 'Repetition', and I say: *Do you go to the same school as you did two years ago? Do you go to the same pub as you did two years ago?* I know I don't . . . ."

Out one era and in the other. The sluggish, arrogant beat starts up: *getting rid of the albatross . . .*

I had eight hours sleep underneath my typewriter, and took another two Vitamin C tablets.

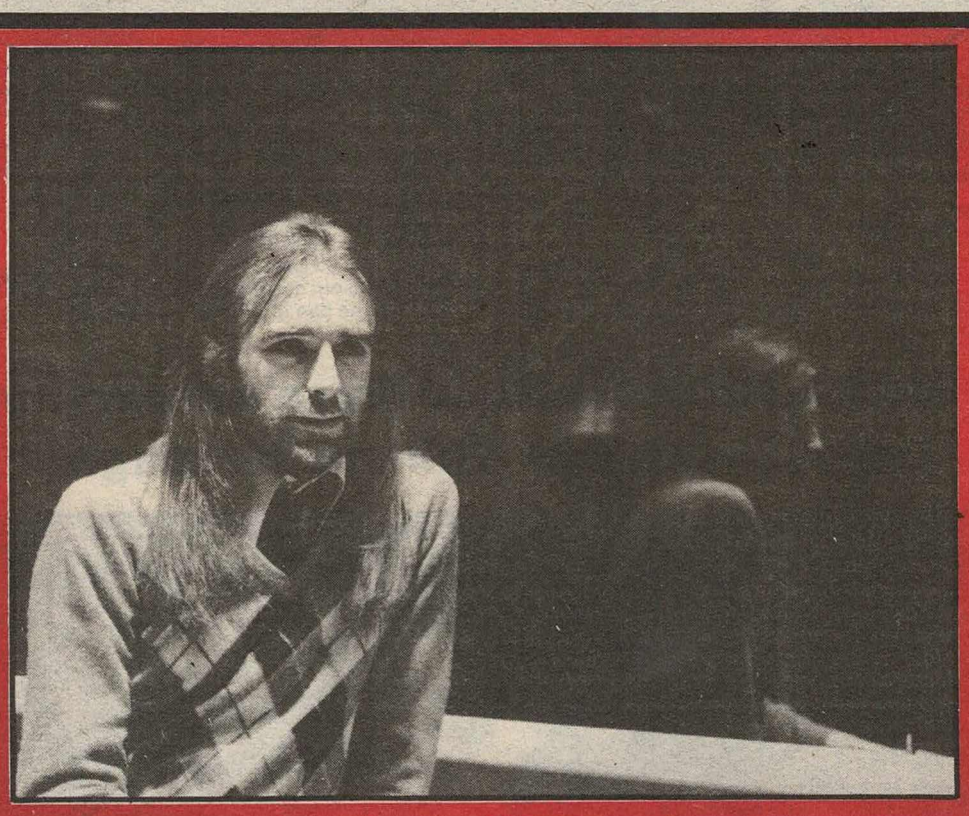
A tangle of grey words . . . . The Fall.

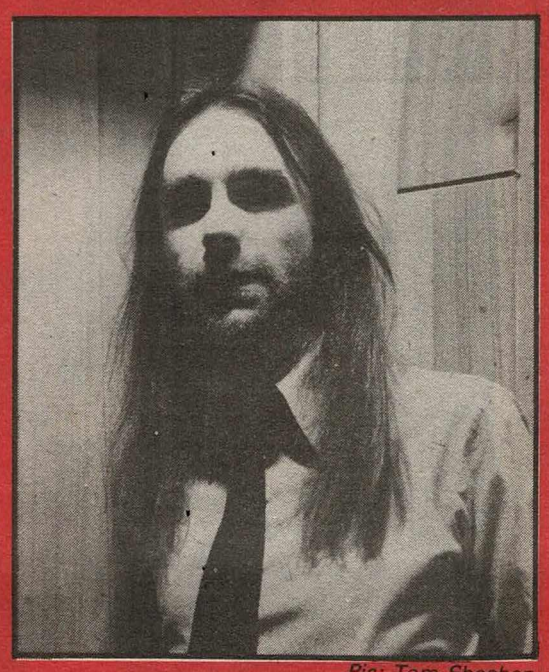
The Fall . . . .

All quotes from Lyrics copyright: Mark E Smith, except where stated.

"I've seen bands crying over reviews . . . some of my favourite reviews are bad ones."

Francis Through The Looking Glass





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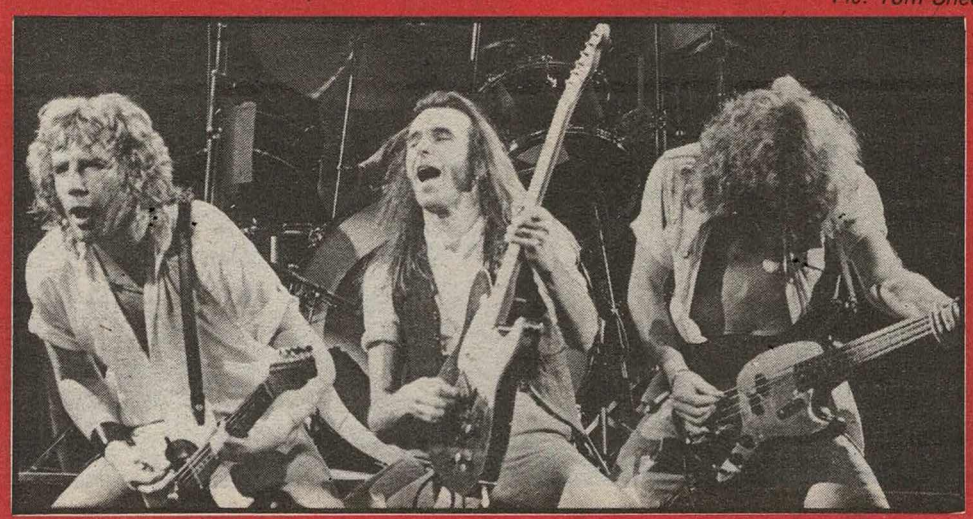

"Cows may come and cows may go but this place stays the same!" — Sign on the wall of a New York Milk Bar.

SEVENTEEN YEARS Status Quo have been at it and in rock'n'roll terms that's as good as anything George Burns can brag about. So OK, you'd think a team of old hands like them would be able to hold court for hours at a stretch with their insights, views and ancedotes, encapsulating the three decades they've spanned with every sage-like epigram. But, as it 'appens, talking to Quo is something akin to getting Lee Brilleaux to write ten thousand words on why he likes the Feelgoods' music.

In my twenty minutes spent trying to get an angle on Fracis Rossi I reckon I fired away with every possible probe that might set the man's unshaven jowels jumping in furies of defence / attack / explanation. But more fool me. They're Status Quo, John, they dropped out of 'the race' a while back and if we don't call them they certainly won't call us. Like a kitchen colander, their design is complete and, for what they do, impossible to improve on.

The myth that the individual members are thinkheads is an obvious, uh, myth. Rossi answers my questions fully, almost mechanically, but always with the utmost economy. In short, he knocks another interview off.

They told me Francis Rossi was in the studios today and if I'd trot along there we might chat. My God, what a prospect. Status Quo in the studio. A studio. But when we get there — rats! It's not Status Quo at all but just Rossi producing Quo factotum Bob Young on a dodgy 10cc type song.The playback of the track is hammering out and for five minutes nobody acknowledges anyone else.

Something about Rossi's manner and his comic brow furrowing tell me that he'd forgotten all about this little interview. His restrained shuffling is a ringer for a bloke who was all set to go to the pictures and has just been reminded that he'd promised to paint the passage first.

Attempting to ask the questions that will force the man to acknowledge Quo's irrelevant old fartdom, I wonder about *those lyrics*. How about the running rock gag that culminated in 'Down, Down'?

"Well, it's obvious to us," he begins, one eye checking what's going on at the mixing desk. "I mean put yourself in our place. We've got a chorus riff that goes *der der diddly der*, and *down down* fitted perfectly. Given our music, that's all it warranted and I doubt if you could come up with anything stronger. All that matters is that it works, dunnit?

"Y'know, it's like all the early rock'n'roll and with Elvis goin' *'Abubbubbub bay, heybee'* and that — the words are just the right sounds. That's what it is wiv us, the words fit, that's all mate."

The Status Quo philosphy is 100% free of any pretensions. Rossi understands the game and the rules better than anyone. He knows he and his group are cast as the dim cousins in rock but he knows that the casting manager is a wanker.

HE hurriedly pulls two chairs into a quiet part of the recording studio and sits opposite me. He spends the first few minutes joking and knocking at photographer Tom Sheehan, who he's met before, and then turns to me and asks, "What sort of thing is this supposed to be?"

I tell him it's a feature in *NME*.

"Oh, I gotcha," he says absentmindedly. Noticing Tom getting his lenses together, Rossi starts unknotting his tie and slipping it off. He begins laughing. "I can't help it, I gotta look good."

I ask him how much of the last twenty years have been devoted to rock'n'roll.

"Well, most of it — all of it. I reckon I missed out on large parts of grow-... I never had a scooter or anything like that, we all missed that teenage whatever it is. All I remember is seeing The Everly Brothers and ahh ... couldn't believe it. And me old man bought me a guitar, y'see, but it's like all them old lines about there never being anything else in your life from then on. That's how it was."

Do you ever feel caged by your experience? Like always being referred to as "the old pros" and carrying 17 years around?

"Erm ... not really, no. Agreed we're sort of sagelike figures if ya want, but you're bound to get attention to it. Obvious. Any band that builds up a history is gonna be asked to talk about it.

"I don't like to get into it too much. I liked the '60s but the '70s narrowed views a lot — mine too — you couldn't simply like this sort of music or that sort of music anymore, you had to ... And this was the big danger with the punk or whatever you call it wave, that it made everything so narrow for a while — dress'n'everything. And that brings the whole thing down. It locks it. There's no choice. I like all sorts of music ... but that's just me getting old I reckon — will you get out of it wiv dat fakkin camera! Sorry Daniel, go on..."

There's an argument that you appear to go into a studio and switch on the old derderderderder riff and knock out albums like shelling peas.

"Ha ... it's not like that. I wish it was."

But does the criticism still get to you?

"Yeah, I spose it does."

Like 'Accident Prone', which was a departure for you, died the death as a single, didn't it? Why are you so bracketed? That was your best record for ages.

"Yeah, I thought it was wonderful and it turned out to be our biggest flop ever. I ain't got the foggiest."

But doesn't that stunt the chances of you taking risks?

" 'Accident Prone' wasn't a risk. It was a great song, wunnit? That's all."

In the *NME* review of the last LP 'Whatever You Want', Tony Stewart thought the album was almost conceptual. That it summed up your careers in a way. Right?

"No, not rea- I suppose one or two songs could be. 'Breaking Away' is from a time when we took a six-month break. When we came to do a gig we're all gettin' inta the suits'n'that, and I said to the rest about bein' old men in boys' clothes and that was the joke. These days though it's beyond a joke."

Do you ever feel old?

"You get knackered. You really feel it when you get into the dressing rooms. And each time it's harder. Funny thing is though that I'm working harder now than ever — more anyhow — not in terms of being onstage but all around, bit o' this, bit o' that."

STATUS QUO are maybe the definitive *blokes'* band. How does it feel to have that army of denimed geezers screaming for you?

"Heh ... well ... flattering? Flattering."

But why do they do it?

"You tell me. They're fanatics in the true sense of the word ... which sometimes I think is odd. Image? Way we look? I dunno, honest. We try to relax it more now, forget about image."

Say if you woke up tomorrow and fancied cutting the old hair? He pauses.

"That might be a bit far. I mean ... all of us are *aware* of what we are. People see you as something and it's horrible cos — whatever it is — you're not and it's embarrassing. Then again there's the ego side of me that loves to be recognised out an' that."

But what does it feel like in front of 50,000 fanatics?

"Wonderful," he says with a nice grin of self-deprecation. "Wonderful — but Christ it's terrifying to imagine what'd happen if they were against us."

Do you live any kind of rock-style life, parties and things?

"Nah, leave off. Even in the '60s we were never in any particular circles. That's all PR that is, y'know, to be seen at so-and-so's party standin' next to someone else. I can understand it from a business point of view but you won't find me there ... not if I can help it."

No temptation to move to L.A. then?

"Me in L.A.!! Haahahaha cor bligh — eh?! Have you ever been there?"

No, I just mean that to other members of the old school it appears to be the done thing, y'know, not needing to make any more LPs.

"But you always need to make another LP. For y'self. Not for money, for y'self. I mean I don't need to do this," he motions toward the mixing desk, "but I enjoy it. It's good to work."

But how about America? How about *conquering* America?

Tell the truth, I'm not terribly interested. It might give us a bit more money or some prestige to satisfy the press. But I'm satisfied knocking about doin' things like this. So I could be in the States now — yip yippee.

"I look at a lot of the new groups saying how they'll never sell out and stuff but they'll never own up to that element of 'dig-me' that's right in there. You're up there because there's a part of you that loves it — actors, rock'n'rollers — dig me. You've got to own up to that before you decide on knocking anything."

PUNK HAD a really strong working class drive to it, though eighty per cent of the bands were about as working class as Auberon Waugh. Whereas Status Quo have both the 'credentials' and the identity. Do you ever feel honour-bound to the proletariat?

"I dunno. What's class but an accent?"

No, I reply, it's far more if you've been herded into special schools that train you for nothing more than menial jobs. It's OK for us all to link arms at rock gigs and forgive some enlightened souls their birth, but there really does exist a treadmill system whereby a whole section of people are kept stupid. It's an evil and I certainly still bear a simmering grudge, not to mention the symptoms.

"Yeah, well I've got no idea what all this street credibility's about. I mean I was coming here this morning in the motor and, y'know, I give a little 'how y'doin' to some fella crossing the road and all I get back is a mean look. There's nuffin' particularly charming or special about those areas."

THE IMAGE of Status Quo as a workmanlike outfit of no-messing ideals is solid true. The image of a bunch of orons going in circles because they know no better is stupid and false. Perhaps Status Quo are the perfect British Ramones and always have been, even before usch 'cartoonrock' theories were available. Like Ramones, they appear as any bozo from the boozers (London style) and they play simple rock'n'roll (British style). But they don't woo rock'n'roll like the New Yorkers. They certainly have far less contrivance attached; Status Quo surviving these days is both amazing and obvious.

Status Quo are peerless and can as much be linked with Rush as they could The Raincoats. To hell with it: they make a gem of a noise at 45rpm. Perhaps that's all there is to it after all.

"Cows may come and cows may go but this place stays the same" — Sign in a New York Milk Bar.

"We don't come here to talk and scoff, We do the job and then piss off" — On the wall of a karsey at London Bridge.

"I'm late, I'm late, for a very important date," confesses Mr Rossi. "Which one's that," asks Danny Baker, "1962?"

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45	52	THE TOURISTS – REALITY EFFECT	4.99	3.74	£1.25 OFF
46	53	E.L.O. – A NEW WORLD RECORD	4.99	3.74	£1.25 OFF
47	34	MANHATTAN TRANSFER – EXTENSIONS	5.00	3.99	£1.01 OFF
48	NEW ENTRY	DUSTY SPRINGFIELD – GREATEST HITS	4.99	3.74	£1.25 OFF
49	44	BARCLAY JAMES HARVEST – Eyes of The Universe	5.06	4.06	£1.00 OFF
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53	58	THE GIBSON BROS. – CUBA	5.29	4.04	£1.25 OFF
54	37	STEVE HOWE – THE STEVE HOWE ALBUM	5.00	3.99	£1.01 OFF
55	45	HUGH CORNWELL – NOSFERATU	4.99	3.74	£1.25 OFF
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TI-IRILLS

Jim says yes to Englebert!

"ELLO 'ello, what's this? Jimmy Pursey really has become Tommy Steele's Little White Bull?

Yes, furthering his quest as all-round family entertainer, J.P. was on hand last Friday to present ITV's 'Solid Gold TOP TWENTY' — an irresistible (or highly resistible, depending on your point of view) chance to swot up on the top 20 million selling singles of the last two decades and witness an unbelievably corny Pursey grapple with a deep-frozen stiff of a script.

Dressed as the festive spiv in black glitzy leggings and red open-necked shirt (no medallion or visible chest hair), he promised us quite a few surprises — his matching blow-dried eyebrows and coiff being but one of them.

Ah, but to the programme content: self-respecting know-it-alls should have figured that The Beatles would score repeatedly but could you have guessed that Abba, The Stones, The Who, Elton John, Motown (and Sham) would not make one single appearance between them while the likes of Ken Dodd and The New Seekers did?

It was enough to make you cry — and so, of course, on cue a huge droplet trickled from J.P.'s eye as he solemnly introduced Dodd's number 7 hit 'Tears'.

The show, quite apart from Pursey, featured some nostalgic film clips and some wonderful factoids. You knew, didn't you, that 'Grease' spawned more than one million seller. Howzabout this, though: "Did you know," said our host, sotto-voce, in his deepest Surrey Cockney tones, "that 'You're The One That I Want' was almost given to Fonzie and Marie Osmond."

Incredible but true.

Smug with such classified information, Jimmy proceeded to tell us that The Fab Four turned up for a telly recording of their number 12 double A-side hit 'We Can Work It Out/Day Tripper' minus their organ. John Lennon had to borrow Ena Sharples' from 'Coronation Street' (say, wasn't this the one that a certain child star called Tony Parsons used to tinkle?).

The suspense became unbearable as we neared the Number One Spot.

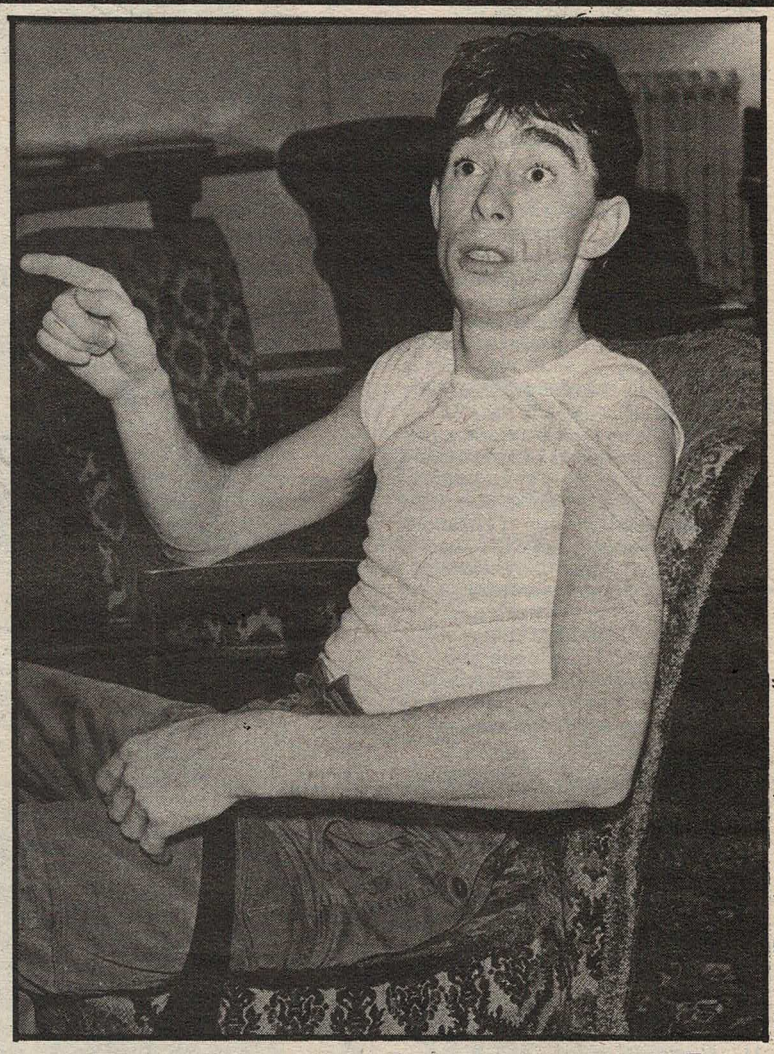
Coming in second, receiving a prize of two nights with J.P. and the collected works of Sham, Boney M with their 'Rivers Of Babylon/Brown Girl In The Ring'.

Finally, though, the moment we've all been waiting for, Jimmy changes into black to suit the dirge-like quality of the All-Time Million Seller, 1978's 'Mull Of Kintyre' (which not only brings Macca's tally to a stupendous 51 hits, co-authoring six of the seven Top Twenty no less, but also makes him an incredibly rich man).

And so, with a wistful shrug of the eyebrow, mourning coat draped over one shoulder and muttering something about Sham still having time to catch up before next decade's show, he was gone, chewing an invisible matchstick as he vanished into the wings.

Bring back Jimmy Saville, almost all is forgiven?

ELISSA VAN POZNAK



"Widow Twankey went that way..."

XMAS IN ARMAGIDEON

CLASH — BACK TO WESTWAY

THERE may have been no Christmas time in Armagideon but at London's Acklam Hall in the early evening of both Christmas and Boxing Days the joint was really rockin'!

Pushing four years on from the band's inception The Clash were continuing in the spirit in which they began by playing literally underneath The Westway and charging a minimal 50p for admission. With the Christmas Day doors open just before five the band provided an irie antidote to what is traditionally the most flatulent few hours of the year.

As well as numbers from their recorded material the band also featured 'Keys To Your Heart' from Strummer's former incarnation with The 101'ers, plus an as yet unrecorded slow blues, with Mick Jones on bottleneck, telling the tale of the guitarist's dad and his involvement in a bank robbery. (Is that true? "Apparently so. That's what they tell me. Anyway, it seems to have entered the mythology now.")

With The Clash UK tour only ten days away the two gigs were in the tradition of the 'secret' Notre Dame shows before the band's Rainbow show last summer and the free show in Fulham before their British tour 18 months ago. In contrast to those covert onstage appearances, not only the band's playing but the fourpiece's (fivepiece, really, as Blockhead Mickey Gallagher's organ is now an essential part of the Clash aural and visual vibe whenever he can make the gig) PA was in great shape, making these two shows, along with the Kampuchea gig, probably the finest Clash shows this chronicler has witnessed.

Though on Christmas day the legal audience limit of 250 was just reached and was probably exceeded the next day, the seasonal treats still put the band several hundred quid in debt. Kosmo Vinyl even personally paid for the posters as a Christmas present.

The posters announcing the gigs weren't actually put up until close to closing-time on Christmas Eve, during which Kozmo managed to get himself nicked, though he was subsequently let off.

Not only did the Christmas Day date feature the Silver Suit Of Kosmo Vinyl ("But it marks something dreadful!") but also the presence of Mick Jones' Gran — e'en as you read Jones is still residing at her 18th-floor tower-block address, which is great for credibility but very bad for his head.

It was the first Clash gig that the legendary lady had witnessed. "Mike's very good, isn't he?" she told a passing Blast Furnace. "A bit loud, though. I do hope they're going to play 'Spanish Bombs'."

For a moment or two the Boxing Day gig seemed close to debacle when the stage was filled with a dozen or so fellows of the skinhead persuasion during 'White Riot'. The theory of Pavlovian reaction was underlined once again as they left the stage immediately the number had ended. "Jimmy Pursey won't be here tonight," muttered Joe, as though he felt JP was about to descend through the ceiling in a Father Christmas outfit.

There was no real threat to the gig, though, largely due to the sterling, smiling manner with which tour manager Johnny Green, despite being pulled off-stage and into the audience himself, controlled the fun.

"You preferred yesterday's, didn't you?" laughed Mick Jones. "Good and elitist was it, without all those rough chaps jumping onstage?

"Actually, they weren't too bad: They just jumped up during 'White Riot' — totally programmed. They were too busy enjoying themselves and getting off on it to cause any real problems or smash the place up.

"In fact, there was a very good Christmas spirit about yesterday's show, a lot of goodwill and good vibes."

A moment or two later I glibly reiterate this to Joe. "Christmas spirit?" he queries. "Yeah, whatever that is."

There was no-one present at either of the gigs who works for the CBS Record Company.

CHRIS SALEWICZ

And so forward into the '80s . . .

HOLD ON to your hats, cats, here we go.

Just take a shufti at the flotsam above. This is Sabu! The very first massive scam from USA this decade.

Touted as 'The Rock Of The '80s', their press release tells us how these boys (BOYS?) are all set to re-define New-Wave. 'Give it dignity' they say.

Well, it doesn't need us to point out that these hipsters have just got to be the most undignified bunch of slippery lunatics ever to ooze from the dread West Coast. I mean, OK chaps, we've all got to earn a few bob in this life but *come* on!

Built around lard cake Paul Sabu — son of Sabu The Elephant Boy of movie fame — we learn the band are truly humble to be part of the great entertainment industry although they are all rockers at heart.

All we at *Thrills* know is that if that guy on the end with the stand-off moustache sucks his gut in any harder his navel is liable to come carooming out his ass. The new Sabu single is called 'Rockin' Rollin' ' and sounds set to be all that these photos would suggest.

These guys share the same country as Talking Heads. May we remind our American readers that their constitution advises them to tear down anything that is a threat.

What an excellent decade this looks set to become . . .

DANNY BAKER

Blondie Videodisc: Yes But No

AS we all know by now, the record industry marketing people believe what you will buy in the future will have a lot to do with video.

Although currently the biggest selling items in pre-recorded video cassettes are pornographic movies the record industry marketing people believe the music fan's resistance to video will break down with the advent of the video disc, when it will be common for new albums to be released as complete audio-visual packages.

Chrysalis Records has become the financial backer of the first full-length album videocassette, a $100,000-plus production of the new Blondie album 'Eat To The Beat'.

Essentially the project is an album-length promo video of the kind long in standard use for industry promotion and distribution to television. But instead of taping one or two songs, as is usual, they've done the whole album, and it's about eight songs too many.

Cut after cut shows the group miming along to a song, with Debbie Harry lip-synching the lyrics and a studio audience trying to look excited. On a couple of songs the group dispenses with instruments and opts for cute skits, "playfully' mucking about in an all too calculated manner.

There is one engaging moment — for 'The Hardest Part', Harry dons a brunette wig and is tarted up as a truck driver's groupie. At the end of the song she turns her back to the camera, leans against a wall and wiggles her rear end very naughtily.

In terms of creativity, this video album doesn't go beyond the imaginative level of your typical *TOTP* or *Midnight Special* segment. In other words, strictly Yawnsville.

It is possible to make rock promo films that are creative, intriguing and funny, as Chuck Statler has proved with his Devo films. Video tapes and records of rock acts may someday be a hot item — if enough directors with imagination move into the field.

RICHARD GRABEL

Yippies In 'Help, We're Being Repressed' Shock

THE YIPPIES of New York are having troubles again. Both their headquarters and Studio 10, their rock 'n' roll club, have been visited by inspectors from the fire department and have been shut down.

Dana Beal told *Village Voice* reporter Howard Smith: "They came down on us right after we co-sponsored a whole bunch of successful benefits with Rock Against Racism.

"At last we had found a consistent way to earn money to further all our objectives. And, even more importantly, we'd come out and publicly announced many times that we and our allies had serious plans to stage demonstrations during the Democratic convention next July in New York City.

"Obviously the authorities either want to destroy us early on, or at least cripple us for the duration, by removing our source of finances and tying us up in endless court battles."

Regular readers may remember that Dana Beal was one of 23 others involved in what promised to be the biggest marijuana trial in history to be heard in Omaha (see Inside Dope). The conspiracy charges alleged the defendants sold more than two tons of marijuana, 800 pounds of hashish and 25 pounds of Thai sticks over an area spanning 20 states, four foreign countries and the continent of Africa.

By way of anti-climax the charges have now been dropped, as a judge ruled that the original permission to wiretap was obtained improperly, and therefore any information obtained was inadmissible as evidence.

Finally, Abbie Hoffman, currently on the run from a cocaine bust, may have to stay on the lam a little longer. He decided to surface recently for a birthday party for himself and his friends at an expensive Chinese restaurant in New York.

When the bill for Abbie and his 40 compatriots came to 4,300, Hoffman glibly announced he had no money. The hat was passed round, 1,800 was collected and Abbie signed an IOU for the rest.

Seems he hopes to be rolling in it shortly when his autobiography, entitled *Soon To Be A Major Motion Picture* is sold to Universal.

DICK TRACY

THRILLS

Next week sees the long-awaited results of our Lowry cartoon competition. Meantime here's Lowry by Colin Fancy of 45, Greenvale Road, London SE9. Not a winner, unfortunately, but a worthy effort.

Storm: Pic: J B Sohiez

Lovers Rock

The Softer They Come . . .

THE current London Weekend Television series *'Babylon'* attempted an examination of the musical and political differences between black youth in London. This succeeded only in posing simplistic stereotypes — the roots reggae follower / Rasta / sufferer in one corner and the Soul-head/hard-working integrationist in the other.

The ideological lines of conflict are at times sharp but the erection of two opposing camps is not only confusing but inaccurate for 'Lovers Rock' has emerged to inhabit and hold the musical middle ground. Even though hard core Rasta youth and heavier dub systems such as Sir Coxsone and Jah Shaka have little time for it, it now occupies an important section of the reggae market.

Almost unnoticed, Storm's lovers rock version of 'It's My House' slipped into the national charts surprisingly outstripping the sales of the Diana Ross version.

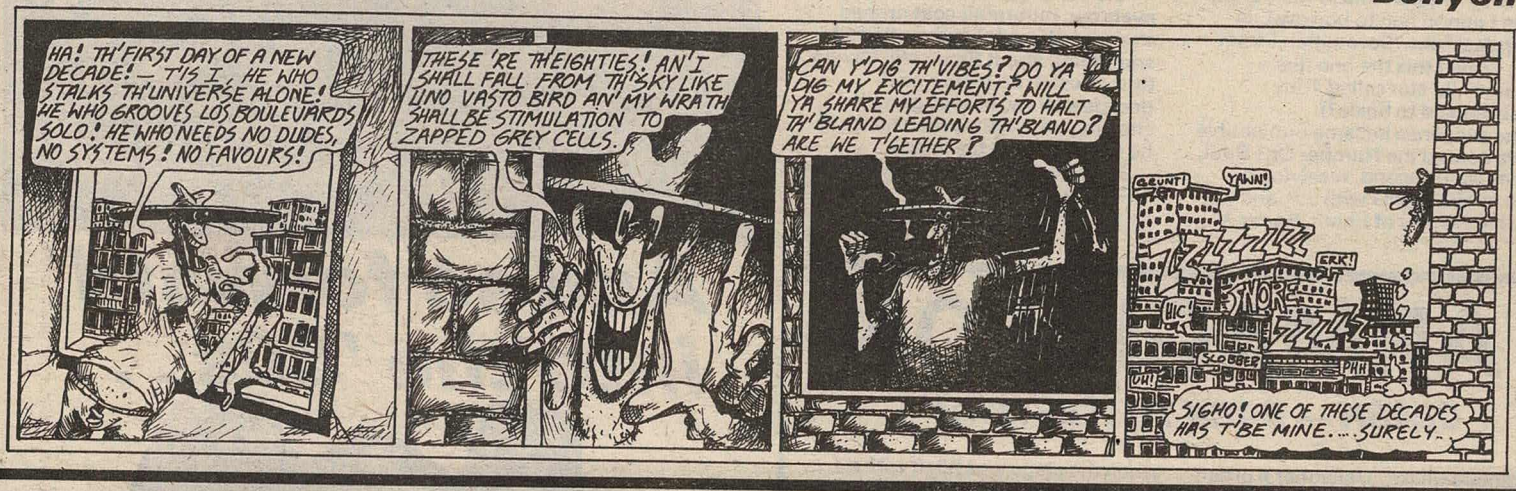
Originally recorded for Sound Off, 'It's My House', sold well in the black record shops and was picked up on by Scope WEA's subsidiary who, while other major record companies have been busy dumping their reggae bands have realised that a potentially large audience exists for the softer side of reggae.

Confronted by the white linen suited image of Storm the gulf between them and the guerrilla chic of most roots 'n' youth bands seems immense. Strictly a family affair, Storm have been playing together for four years and eighteen year old Anita, the bands bassie is the oldest member. Unlike most rock musicians Storm don't elucidate much on their music. Playing Lovers is just the 'natural' thing to do; it's more the music of their generation than, say that of Burning Spear.

PAUL BRADSHAW

THRILLS

The Lone Groover — Benyon


HA! TH'FIRST DAY OF A NEW DECADE! — T'IS I HE WHO STALKS TH'UNIVERSE ALONE! HE WHO GROOVES LOS BOULEVARDS SOLO! HE WHO NEEDS NO DUDES, NO SYSTEMS! NO FAVOURS!
THESE 'RE THEIGHTIES! AN' I SHALL FALL FROM TH'SKY LIKE LINO VASTO BIRD AN' MY WRATH SHALL BE STIMULATION TO ZAPPED GREY CELLS.
CAN Y'DIG TH'VIBES? DO YA DIG MY EXCITEMENT? WILL YA SHARE MY EFFORTS TO HALT TH'BLAND LEADING TH'BLAND? ARE WE T'GETHER?
GRUNT! YAWN! ERK! SNORE HIC! SLOBBER OH! PHM
SIGHO! ONE OF THESE DECADES HAS T'BE MINE.... SURELY..

UNDOUBTEDLY BRITAIN'S NUMBER ONE DISCO NIGHT

208 FUNKY SUNDAY 208

RADIO LUXEMBOURG PRESENTS

GUEST DJs

TONY PRINCE — ROB JONES — MARK WESLEY

+

KELLY — IMPORTS — CHRIS RYAN

THE HAMMERSMITH PALAIS

7.30pm — 12.00 (midnight)
SHEPARDS BUSH ROAD, LONDON W6

Lene and Nina demonstrate the wild-eyed loony look. Herman Brood meanwhile crumples wine glass in fist.

Lene & Nina Do The Cha Cha

AMSTERDAM'S middle-aged *nouveau riche* weave their way through the police cordon to protect them from the non-existent thronging crowds at the premiere of *Cha Cha*, Holland's first rock film.

Then the stars arrive — Herman Brood, Nina Hagen, Lene Lovich and Les but not least Chapell.

The film was not as bad as most independent observers had feared. Director Herbert Curiel's romp started off as the story of a drug-ravaged rock star hyphen bank robber. Then along came Nina so they shot some stuff with her, then along came Lene and Les and they just kept on shooting.

Cha Cha manages to cram four films into 100 minutes and none of them seem to get anywhere. Plot one — as above. Plot two — Herman in a mental hospital being nursed and tormented by Nina. Plot three — Herman's band ditch him for Nina and Lene. Plot four — what was really going on; and this was the only script which showed promise. There was enough footage in the film to make a harmless and popular pseudo-documentary about our four heroes in Amsterdam's musical underworld, and despite her size, Nina Hagen stuck out head and shoulders above the rest like a sore but dayglo laquered thumb.

She can't act brilliantly, but then she doesn't need to. She is herself so bizarrely improbable. She transfers her spitting wildcat stage act to an intimate "do-you-come-here-often" bar scene.

Nevertheless, the best footage was left on the cutting-room floor. It was after all supposed to be a rock film and, while it does contain some respectable jams, the original scenario allowed for some of Holland's lesser-known bands to perform their tricks. The Meteors survived, but White Honey, Inside Nipples, Phoney and the Hardcore, Floor van Zutphen and the Streetbeats plummeted to oblivion — a fate they do not deserve.

MARTIN CLEAVER

THRILLS

More Zappa Nonsense

FRANK Zappa's first movie since *200 Motels* is due for release in the States this month. *Baby Snakes*, subtitled 'A movie about people who do stuff that is not normal' is financed by Zappa to the tune of half a million dollars.

It's the result of two year's work, with Zappa acting as producer, director, supervising editor, star and composer, and features many tracks from the *Sheik Yerbouti* album plus some new material.

Zappa told Howard Smith of the *Village Voice:* "Most of it deals with strange forms of behaviour — actual real behaviour. Very little of it is concert footage. The camera just happened to be on while various individuals were doing these unusual things."

Zappa fans may recall a track of his in the *Old Grizzly Whiny Turnip* illustrated by animator Bruce Bickford. *Baby Snakes* will feature no less than half an hour of this madman's work. Zappa revealed: "Can you imagine what it would look like if a hamburger ate a man's face? It happens while a clay man in a clay audience watches a clay movie."

DICK TRACY

THRILLS

Herzog—Indians On The Warpath

LIFE on location in Peru is proving difficult for Werner Herzog, the cult German film director currently riding his biggest popularity wave ever following the releases last year of his critically acclaimed *Nosferatu* and *Woyzeck*.

With filming already started some six months back on *Fitzcarraldo*, his eleventh film (and his first with big money behind it), his camp in the Peruvian Anazon jungle was attacked two weekends ago by the Aguaruna Indians who inhabit the region.

Herzog himself was in Lima at the time of the attack, the culmination of a conflict that commenced as soon as filming began. The director said that two groups of Agarunas converged on the camp and destroyed twenty-five huts, medicines and equipment.

Also in Lima was the Aguaruna leader Evaristo Nukuag who contradicted the European's reports. He said instead that only five huts were burnt and that anyway this was largely the result of a misunderstanding. One of Herzog's own workers, Nukuag claimed, had set fire to the first hut, the other four being set on fire by Aguarunas who arrived later and assumed the first had been burnt down by members of their own tribe.

The Aguarunas object to what they claim is high-handed, colonial-like treatment by the director and by Peruvian authorities, and also to the subject-matter of the movie — the Peruvian-born nineteenth century rubber baron Carlos Fermin Fitzcarraldo, notorious for murdering and enslaving Indians.

In October of this year, *Time Out* carried a report from the *National Peoples News* which said that four Aguarunas had been arrested after opposing plans to make the film.

***Time Out* further said it had received two documents, one entitled "Account Of What Happened In The Native Community Of Wawain" signed by thirty-nine villagers, and the other an official submission from the council of the Aguaruna and Huambisa districts to the human rights organisation Survival International.**

Both reports said that locals had refused permission for the film to be made on their territory, at which time Herzog enlisted the local military from a nearby garrison.

The villagers' claim they were intimidated to sign a document which forced them to co-operate, and laid down a programme of work for the community, and that one of the members of the community was attacked physically before members of his own family.

Herzog himself described these reports as "a blatant lie".

From Lima he said: "We're not invading a tribe of untouched natives. The Aguaranas are politically probably the best organised group of Indians in Peru. All of them without exception wear long modern trousers and shirts, some of them T-shirts with John Travolta and Disco Fever on them.

"My film will not distort their identity or touch their dignity. On the contrary, the spirit of the film will be on the side of the Aguaranas and it will try and define their strong culture as it used to be before Travolta."

It is not known whether Herzog ran into any difficulties during the previous film he made in Peru, the highly rated *Aguirre, Wrath Of God*.

However, there are reports that at one stage he forced an exhausted Klaus Kinski, the lead actor, back to work at gunpoint.

CHRIS SALEWICZ

THRILLS

Up to his neck in it. A scene from Herzog's last Peruvian adventure.

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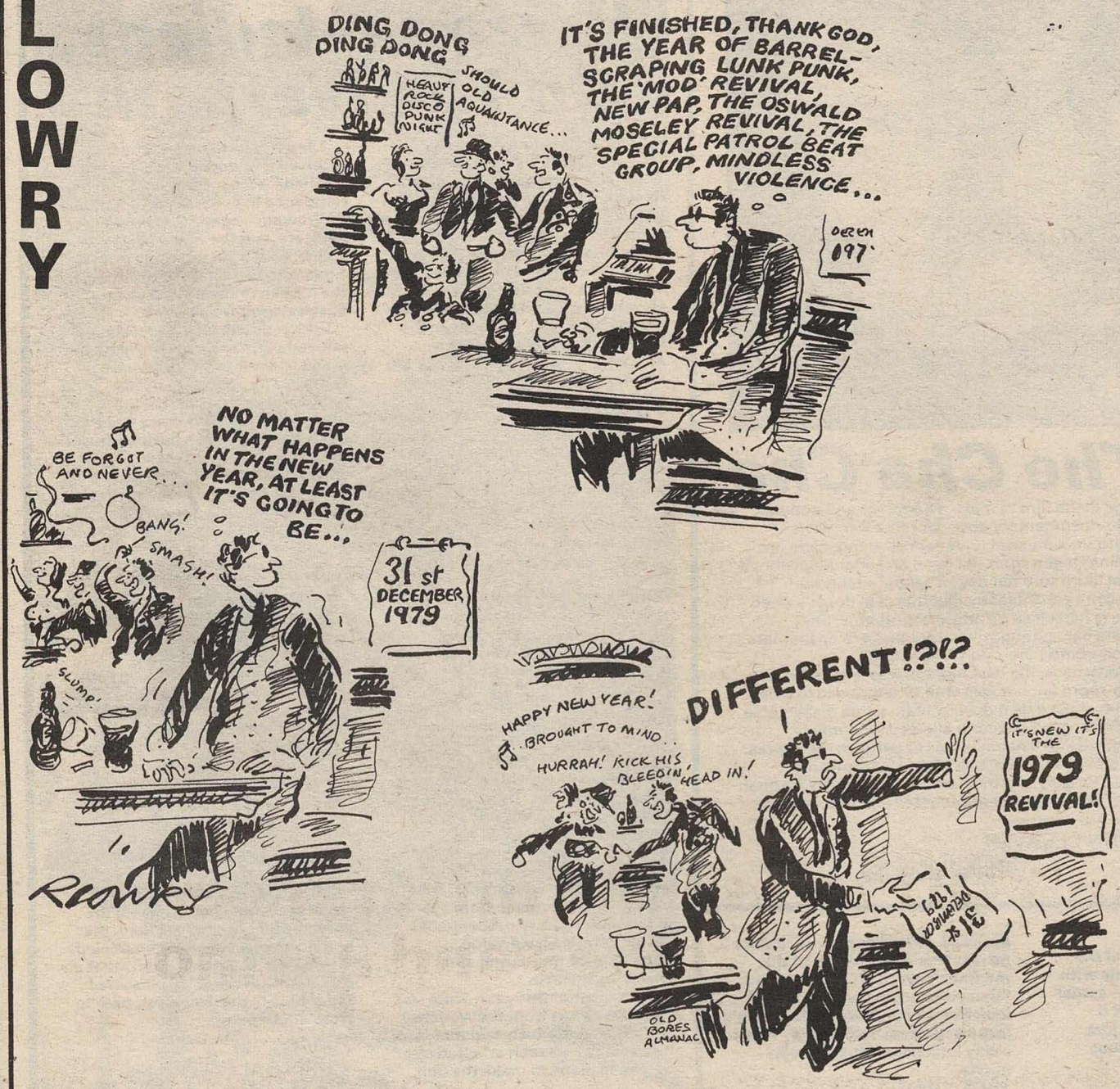
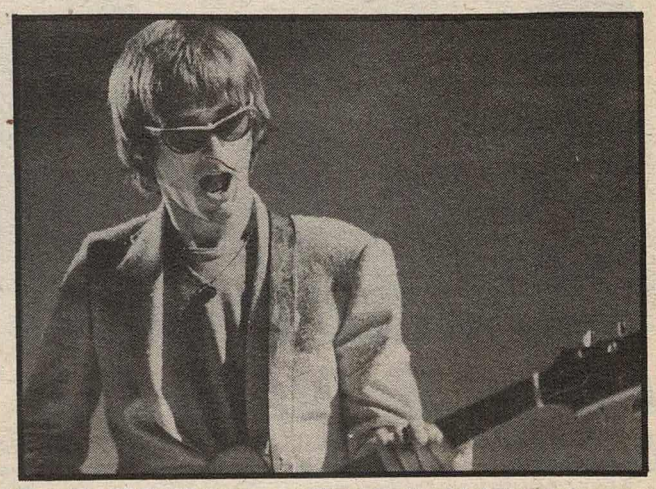

DING DONG DING DONG
HEAVY ROCK DISCO PUNK NIGHT
SHOULD OLD AQUAINTANCE...
IT'S FINISHED, THANK GOD, THE YEAR OF BARREL-SCRAPING LUNK PUNK, THE 'MOD' REVIVAL, NEW PAP, THE OSWALD MOSELEY REVIVAL, THE SPECIAL PATROL BEAT GROUP, MINDLESS VIOLENCE...
DEREK 1979
BE FORGOT AND NEVER...
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS IN THE NEW YEAR, AT LEAST IT'S GOING TO BE...
BANG!
SMASH!
SLUMP!
LOVE
31st DECEMBER 1979
HAPPY NEW YEAR!
BROUGHT TO MIND..
HURRAH! KICK HIS BLEEDIN' HEAD IN!
DIFFERENT!?!?
IT'S NEW IT'S THE 1979 REVIVAL!
OLD BORES ALMANAC

OLDFIELD
OWNS UP AT LAST

"I couldn't even write my name"



Pic: Jill Furmanovsky

MIKE Oldfield, the unlikely victim of a riches-to-rags story — he personally lost over two hundred thousand smackers on a tour that caused rumblings at the Stock Exchange — is also rueing his recent exploits as a lyricist.

It seems he dreamt up some neat little couplets for a track called 'Sally', on his new album, only for Virgin to put the block on what they considered to be a real dufferoo.

However, some 30,000 copies of the album bearing the offending track were out and in the shops before the kid from Exegesis supplied a replacement opus, also titled 'Sally' (the name of Mike's wife as well as his sister) and sporting a further sample of Oldfield's ineptitude as a budding Lorenz Hart.

To his credit, Oldfield acknowledges his short-comings in the words-on-wax department.

"I'm not very good at writing lyrics," he mused, contemplating his last quarter million quids-worth of assets. "But then, I've never liked poetry. The only sort I've ever liked is the kind of thing Spike Milligan writes. I've been looking for someone to write good lyrics for me and I actually asked Richard Thompson to come up with a couple of things for 'Platinum', my latest album — but when it got around to it, he just couldn't come up with them."

Meanwhile, Oldfield is planning to make his next tour less financially disastrous by not only going out with a smaller entourage but by hopefully gaining sponsorship from Arthur Guinness and Co., brewers of the campanologist's favourite tipple.

Mike says that he's also fitting in a Dublin concert along the way so that he can indulge in large swigs of the original, Liffey-flavoured brew.

That way, even if the tour's not breaking even, he won't be in a position to worry overmuch.

QUASIMODO

THRILLS

Comic Cuts

THE STORY SO FAR . . .

Ageing country star Good Ol' Boy Johnny Cash is at the peak of his career. To achieve this prominence, however, a dreadful toll has been wreaked on his soul. The country singer lifestyle of booze, bennies and bad living has finally caught up with Johnny, leaving him a hopeless *amphetamine addict!*

With the help of his loyal wife, June, though, and ample faith in the power of *the Lo'd,* Johnny is about to git out there and lick Satan . . .

Now read on . . .

(This cartoon extract is taken from *Hello, I'm Johnny Cash,* a Spire Christian Comic).

JUNE, I'M HOME!!!
AND I NEED HELP!!!
I'VE GOT TO GET THIS DEVIL OFF MY BACK!
MY FOLKS AND I WILL MOVE IN WITH YOU, JOHNNY!
SHAKIN' THE HABIT WAS ROUGH!
CALL ON GOD, JOHNNY---
DON'T WEAKEN!!!
I ALREADY WEAKENED!!!
BUT I COULDN'T FIND ANY PILLS!
YOU TOOK THEM, DIDN'T YOU?
A QUART JAR FULL!
THANK GOD YOU GOT THEM!
BUT EVERY DAY'S GONNA BE A BRAND-NEW MOUNTAIN!
I'LL CLIMB THEM WITH YOU, JOHNNY!
GOD WILL PULL US TO THE TOP!
25

Smashing tapes at shattering prices.

Memorex CRO2 C90 cassette. Boots normal price £2.30. Offer price £1.50* **SAVE 80p**

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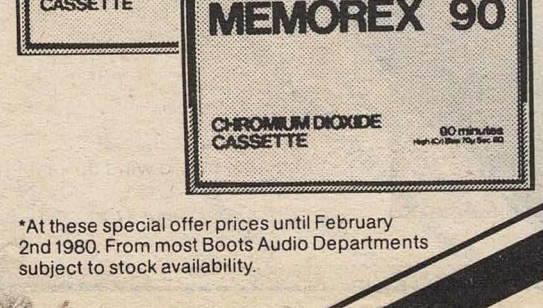
Boots is the place. Memorex is the name. Memorex Chromium Dioxide cassettes are unbeatable value at £1.50* for a C90 and just 99p* for a C60. So have a smashing time. Buy your cassettes at Boots.



*At these special offer prices until February 2nd 1980. From most Boots Audio Departments subject to stock availability.

Boots

Make the most of your Boots.

The Dickies come clean, the kids go bananas, and Mark Ellen tackles one of the great philosophical problems of our era: Dickiemania.

Dickies in usual tiresome silly masks . . .

Can YOU to tell the difference between The Dickies and a wino eating a live chicken?

SLUMPED ON a chair in a dressing room, towelling his shag-haired mop, is Leonard Graves Philips, singer with The Dickies. He sees things very clearly; he's nobody's fool but his own.

"An American Dickies fan?" He chews my question carefully. "Hair down to here, right? A surfer, a head, an acid casualty.

"An English Dickies fan?" He glances nervously at the door. "No pubic hair; gender questionable; enthusiastic; broke. Probably carries a high phlegm count in its system," he adds from the depths of his towel.

I tell him the crowd's going bananas, and he goes bananas too.

"Aaaaaaaagh!" shrieks Leonard, frenzied, eyes wide, scrabbling at thin air. "Don't use *that* word — aaaaaaagh! — anything but *that* word!"

Bananas. This is Dickiemania.

THE DOOR bulges at the hinges and bursts open. From behind it barge the youth of Edinburgh, and they mean *business.* A ruthless troop, jaws set in grim determination, scouring the place for plectrums, broken strings, anything they can cram into their jacket pockets; scarcely one of them a day over 15.

The Dickies find themselves herded into corners by a sea of pen-touting arms, scrawling their bylines on anything from a photo to a poster to an empty packet of fags.

There's this one little geezer who's just a touch more aggressive than the rest. Armed with a biro and an album cover, he's got keyboardman Chuck Wagon up against a wall. "Sign this," he barks in a brogue so thick you could build walls with it. Dickies pressperson Kate Robinson asks him how old he is. Twelve, he says. "Twelve!" she mouths the word over his head to me. "Twelve!" I echo back. We feel old, believe me.

The Dickies are getting quite used to all this by now. They did an 'in-store appearance' in Newcastle and damn near had a riot on their hands. Two and a half thousand kids showed up; they skipped school just to queue for autographs. So many of them were pressed against the store window that it shattered. The police and ambulances were called in, the local press photographers in hot pursuit. The Dickies signed autographs for two solid hours. They thought their hands would seize up and drop off.

They call this Dickiemania. It's bananas.

MEET THE DICKIES! Leonard Graves Philips is lanky, almost awkward, witty, vociferous, honest to a fault and very, very shrewd. He has the kind of vivid imagination that's fired by spacecomix and sci-fi. The band's transit is awash with dog-eared space novelettes.

He has a fascination for lampooning the most inbred traits in the average American psyche, and he also adores fantastic sci-fi/spook movies. This makes his songs a sight more complex, sharp and subtle than is humanly possible to decipher from their regulation two-minutes-thirty of demented punk-a-hula.

He lifts the lid on a couple of his recent lyrics, 'I'm A Chollo' and 'Attack Of The Mole Men'.

"A Chollo's a Mexican/American — a Chicano. They cut their hair very short and wear khaki pants and Pendleton shirts. The song's a kind of ballad about a white middle-class surfer who decides he wants to become a Chollo, and he shaves off all his hair and sells his van and buys a lowered Chevy, and acclimatises himself to Chollo society.

" 'Attack Of The Mole Men' is inspired by the movie *The Mole People,* which is a science fiction thing about some explorers who are out climbing a mountain and fall into this little fissure, and they find this race of albinos who use these sub-human types — these mole creatures — for slave labour and stuff. And they worship this thing called The Eye Of Ishtah, and if they have an outcast from society, they throw him under The Eye Of Ishtah and he burns to death."

On stage, such details tend to pass you by.

He's also much enamoured of George Romero, the title of the new album 'Dawn Of The Dickies' deriving from Romero's *Dawn Of The Dead.*

"Romero's ideas of entertainment are really good because they're just really corny and gross and bloody. In fact, I wanted to call the album 'Nightmare Alley' or 'Git The Snack' as I wanted to have some *geek*-dom in the thing." (Footnote: a 'geek' by Leonard's way of thinking being a wino/street freak, a kind of busker, who commits gut-churning acts for moolah). "I really associate my work with being a geek. I think there's a lot of parallels between a Dickie show and watching a wino eat a live chicken."

STAN LEE (guitar) is stocky, curly-haired, looks like he should be in The Rubinoos and talks with the sort of thick, catarrhal whine that you associate with mellow Californians who are permanently blocked out of their brains. He'll tell you it was The Damned playing L.A. in '77 that first stirred him into action.

"They were *incredible.* They did a 17-minute set and I just laughed hysterically. I was crying all the time they were on. I enjoyed that show more than anything I'd seen in years, so I decided it was time for a change."

Billy Club (bass) wears pyjamas on stage and so looks like Johnny Fingers. He was at school with Stan and Karlos Kaballero, the drummer. He describes their San Fernando Valley homeland as a smog-infested concrete jungle and not the rolling rustic pasture its name might suggest. "Some days every year you can see the hills," says Billy. "On the other 363 you can't."

Chuck Wagon plays keyboards. For two of the three days I'm with the band he doesn't speak a single word. Not one. When he does, it's clear he's got no idea where he's been, where he is, or even where he's going to. "Just put me in the van, and put me on stage, and I'm away," says Chuck, smiling a clockwork smile.

CONSIDER the facts: five 22-year-old, self-confessed, middle-class, high school drop-outs form a band in late '77. It's a shameless, totally contrived, punked-up parody of everything from Black Sabbath to Simon and Garfunkel cranked to a fashionable amphetamine traction and delivered with the aid of rubber dog masks, goggles and gorilla gear amid affectionate showers of sputum.

Their debut album, 'The Incredible Shrinking Dickies' (pressed in wretched banana-hued vinyl, a virtual hand-out at £2.99) died in the States, was never even released in Europe and yet shifted a miraculous 50,000 copies in the UK despite getting a sound critical mincing.

Hence the same five people are now to be found winding across the bleak and sodden landscape between Aberdeen and Edinburgh through the driving rains of their second UK tour.

How, you might wonder, has all this been allowed to happen? And how did it start, and why?

Leonard: "We all had different motives for starting. I was on Social Security and needed money to go to college. I was taking a lot of philosophy courses and I got pretty wigged out, so I joined for therapeutic, psycho-sexual reasons. Also, I hadn't had sex in two years, so I figured I'd better get out of my room and do something about this."

Stan: "Billy was over in England and saw all these early thing happening. He brought back The Damned's 'New Rose' and 'Anarchy In The UK' and we just thought they were great."

Fuelled by the currently huge potential in the hep L.A. underground for rocketing to overnite status, Stan and Leonard formed The Dickies from the rags of their high-school psychedelia. They figured that any idiot could be in a punk rock band, and so they stood a better chance than most. It's easy, they thought, rifle up a bunch of old standards and churn them out at breakneck speed, throw in a few originals — just to keep the local hipsters guessing as to your political stance, man — and see if any fool wants to buy it.

Six months, they decided, would be the top line. After that, they'd split up. They had eight songs and one ambition.

Stan: "We just wanted to get into *Slash* magazine." (Then the L.A. punk gospel).

Leonard: "We *still* want to get into *Slash* magazine. I always had this dream about having my face on the cover."

"Blind with fright", they stormed L.A. Whisky-A-Go-Go in the autumn of '77. Two weeks later, they played the local hard-core punk outlet, The Masque, and found they'd attracted a following of "gnarly characters". These days, it's pretty hard to believe that anyone could have taken them seriously.

"Well, it was pretty new then," counters Stan. "There were about 50 kids in Hollywood who were the real chic Anglophile kids who caught all the new and trendy things coming, so they could relate to it real quick. They're the first to relate to things and the first to damn them when they get passe."

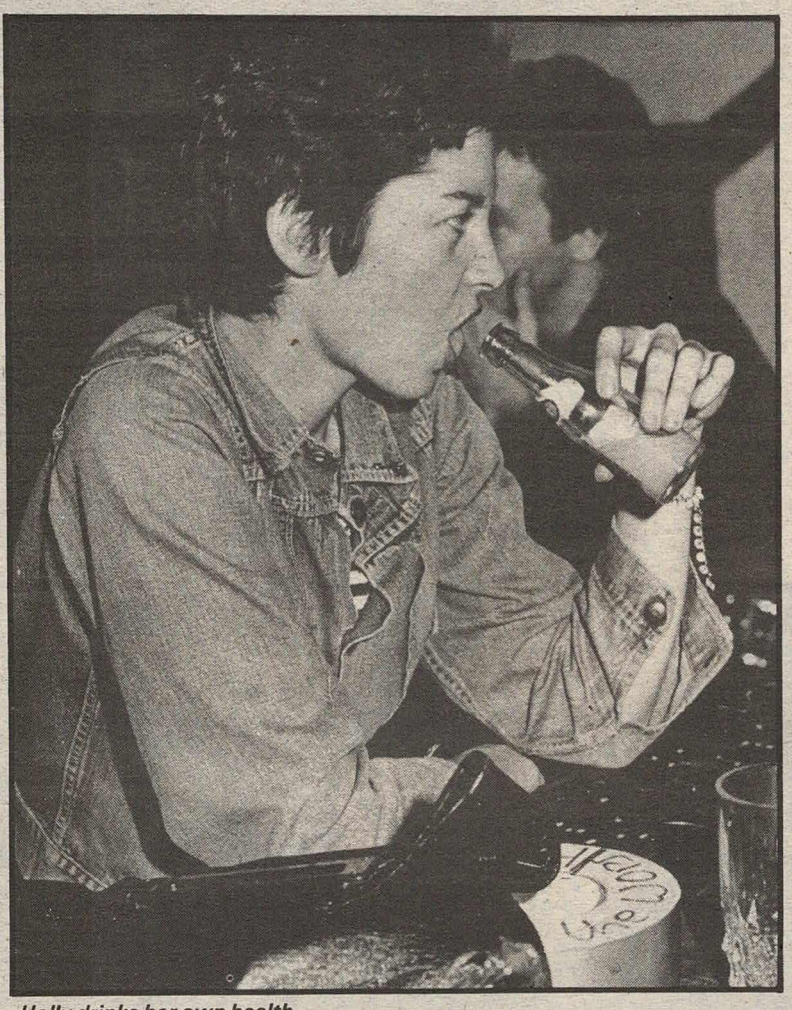
Adds Leonard: "I think also they felt a little bit artistically conned after seeing us a few times. The more they tried to pay attention to the *attitude* we were trying to put across in our lyrics, the more political we seemed to get. Till finally it was just 'Hey these guys are just a comedy routine doing some *schtick.* This isn't *punk rock.* Let's go and see some *real* punk rock bands. Besides that, they're on A&M. Who *needs* it?' "

So they never imagined for a moment that they'd wind up selling

Continues page 31

Dickies revealed (L-R): Stan Lee, Karlos K, Leonard Graves Philips, Billy Club, Chuck Wagon.

Holly would



Holly drinks her own health.

HOLLY is from Los Angeles, but she came over to England because she didn't quite fit in there. She used to sit in the basement of The Masque — the original L.A. punk club that looks just like the old Covent Garden Roxy — only coming out after dark. She didn't like the sun, she didn't like the heat, she didn't like the beaches, and she didn't like lots of other things that she was supposed to like over there.

There was one thing she was interested in though — her band, Holly and The Italians (none of whom were Italian), but the Californian climate didn't suit them either. Being a punk/new wave band, it was virtually impossible to get gigs, never mind any kind of record deal. So Holly and her drummer Steve Young fled the country earlier this year, leaving behind their bass player — who wanted to be a doctor — for a country where people didn't fritter away their days on the beach (although not from choice) and treated Holly and The Italians' kind of music more seriously.

Holly Vincent knew that because she'd been here before, when she'd "dropped out of high school" — another thing she didn't fit into — and run away to England. She played drums in a couple of bands, then got deported because her visa had run out over a year ago.

Steve has never been to England before, but seems content here — at least, he can't think of any reason to go back to L.A.

"If you're starting out in a band in Los Angeles," he drawls, running the name into one, "you can only play in a few clubs in Hollywood, then that's it. After that you've got to play in some strange far-out town like Santa Rosa or San Diego (some 400 miles away) where you'll play in bars. It's ridiculous because there's no really tight group of clubs in California. Here there are more clubs to go to, more to play in — in any one area. Here we're playing three or four times a week, in different places, whereas in Hollywood we were only playing maybe twice every three weeks, in one place. I don't know why but there seem to be a few bands who monopolise the clubs in Hollywood.

"And in Hollywood the record companies aren't very daring. They sign safe acts like The Knack and The Motels. In England they're more willing to take chances, and I think that's because there are more places to see the bands, and for other people to see them. The word gets round."

IT certainly seems to be getting round pretty quickly over here. The band only started playing gigs in September, when they acquired a new bass player, Mark Henry, and already they have released a one-off single on Oval Records, 'Tell That Girl To Shut Up', and are getting plenty of gigs — purely through their own endeavours, Mark points out.

They literally walked from place to place, playing their demo tape to booking agents and asking for gigs. A lot of success, Mark says, was through sheer good luck — like being in the Nashville and Hope And Anchor booking agents' office just as a band were cancelling for the following evening at the Hope.

Holly and The Italians' music is loud, fast and energetic, obviously punk influenced, but Holly's songs and lyrics have a distinct '60s Motown feel, which adds a new dimension to their type of music.

Holly delivers the simple, sometines sentimental, sometimes coy, lyrics in a brash, bold manner. She oozes confidence onstage with her hard, serious features, short hair and tomboyish stance, but offstage she is modest about the audience's enthusiasm.

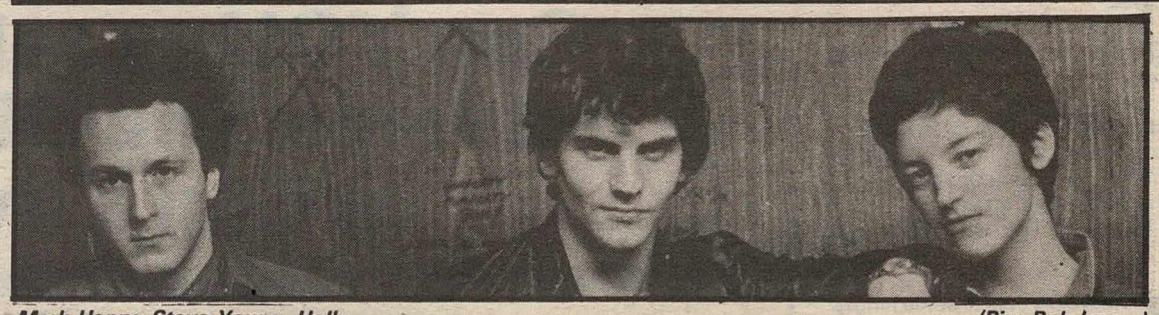
Both she and the band are cautious about future plans. They want to wait before considering any long-term deal, "scout around and sort out the good guys from the bad guys," as Mark Says. "We're all very aware of not going too fast into things and getting built up too fast like a band like The Photos. They signed a massive deal before anyone had really heard of them, so consequently when people go to see them they maybe expect them to be better than they are. That's just too much strain — certainly for a band like us."

And for the moment they intend to keep their basic three-man line-up, although they have had people approaching them and asking if they needed a second guitarist.

"I mean, there are obviously holes in a three-piece," Mark agrees, "but our strength lies in our material. Anyway, if we were anything more than a three-piece there's no way we'd be doing anything, through financial reasons. Really. I mean everything's right on the line at the moment."

He takes the £20 for the night's gig and immediately puts £15 aside for expenses. "I mean right on the line."

by Deanne Pearson



Mark Hanry, Steve Young, Holly. *(Pix: Bob Isaacs)*

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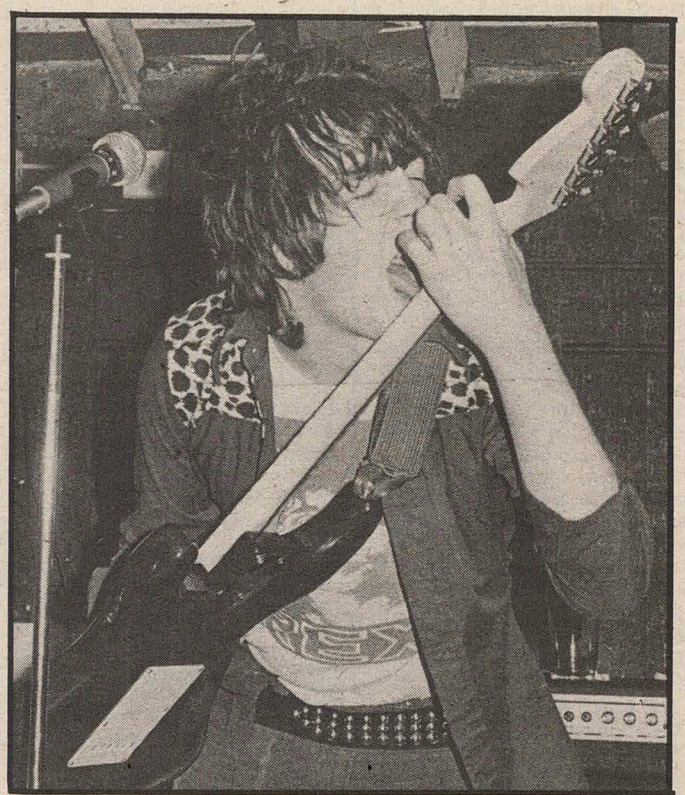
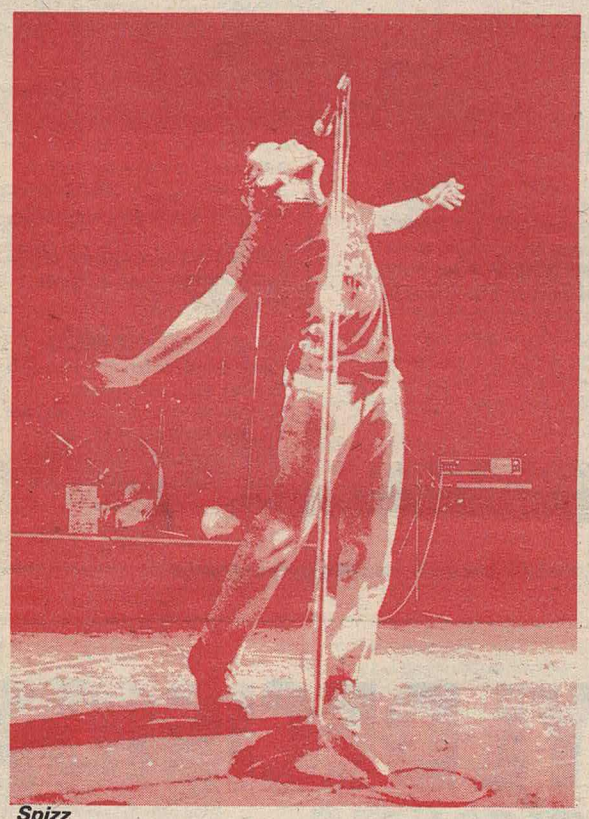


Rudi

Madness



Spizz

Guest Reviewer: TOM ROBINSON

Flying Vultures, circa 1970, with Tom Robinson on extreme right.

Psychedelic Furs

VERY FEW record companies released singles over the Christmas holiday so nearly all the discs up for review here in the first week of January had been left at the bottom of the pile in Rambali's drawer over the past month or two — mostly independents overlooked during the Yuletide stampede for the charts. Hardly seemed worth reviewing the really lousy ones from majors or independents: Anita Harris and Barry Manilow aren't working within the same terms of reference as the other artists here, and no-one wants to read that The Greensleeves from Aberystwyth have forked out their life savings to make a record that's utterly worthless. Least of all the band. So all the singles appearing on this page had at least some point of interest to recommend them . . . one or two dishonourable exceptions of course but this is *NME* after all — can't let the side down completely. As to the remaining stack oh so discretely returned to Paul's bottom drawer early this week, the less said the better.

23 JEWELS: Playing Bogart/"You Don't Know Me" (Temporary). Alright over the top, men . . . It's all too easy when choosing favourite records to opt for something utterly obscure for the sake of sheer perversity, but 'Playing Bogart' stood out by 1.60934 kilometres without fail every time I listened through the current batch of singles on my cassette player — in the bath, over breakfast, going to gigs — made no odds. This record has the kind of freshness, energy and pure enthusiasm that can't be purchased, faked or learned, coupled with a distinctive band sound somewhere between Cure and John Alder of The Jags. It's also a fine piece of pop songwriting that puts many would-be Costellos to shame. There are no singles of the week this week; this disc isn't "better" than any of the others or any more likely to prove this year's "White Riot". It simply gave the most pleasure. Temporary Records are at 418 Berridge Road, Hyson Green, Nottingham.

MADNESS: My Girl (Stiff). The hottest new "name" act in this selection, already marked down for heavy airplay and subsequent chart action. Can't say I'm crazy about Madness, but lyrically this track (from the album) is an interesting step beyond most, uh, 'contemporary dance music', be it mod, soul or ska — all of which have bordered on the two-dimensional when it came to subject matter, rather like pre-'White Man in Hammersmith Palais' punk. Here the Insane Ones deal deftly with a tricky area of interpersonal relations: how *do* you explain that you'd rather watch telly on your own for a night than go out to the movies with the boyfriend/girlfriend you also happen to love very much? I've been trying for ages, and now Madness have pulled it off in a single three minute pop song. Flip cockney vocal delivery (Dury Deadpan, it's called in the trade) and a shift of emphasis from sax to acoustic piano . . . but I bet you've heard it already by now. What am I telling you this for?

TEETH: Say Hello To Suzy (Soho) 22 bars into a perfectly good song suddenly it's manic Ruth Underwood xylophones and *"Eye-yi-yi-yi-yi"* female backing vocals: why for Christsake? Listen, I'm not knocking this record for being bad but because it could've been superb. The lyrics are witty, the hooks hooky and the chords refreshingly thought out: no call at all to spring secondhand Zappa riffs onto the unsuspecting listener. Not that I have anything at all against Uncle Frank — it's just that he does it so much better himself.

THE GREEDIES: A Merry Jingle (Greed). Debut waxing from the Thin Pistols — or is it Sex Lizzy??? Great sound. Shame about the song.

THE PIRANHAS: Space Invaders (Virgin). The band have a tasty drummer, a lead singer like an uncool Nick Plytas on benzedrine and a sizeable following around the country. If you like the band and for any reason still haven't heard this then rush out and buy it at once: 'Space Invaders' and the live flip have captured The Pirhanas' stage flavour immaculately. The song itself is a beaty celebration of man's addiction to the electronic pastime currently devouring 10p's in motorway services across the nation. Personally I find the group's present approach too facetious to be taken very seriously and too laboured to be sidesplittingly funny, though the wags organising Rock Against Pirhanas back in Brighton are perhaps overstating the case . . . It'd be nice to see them either go totally off the wall like the early Poodles or else relax, and develop their considerable musical potential. 'Space Invaders' is after all a very infectious tune.

THE CANNIBALS: Pick'n'Choose (Hit). The closest thing I've heard to the Stones circa 1965 since 'Aftermath', acne and all — Mike Spencer even swiped the "la ta ta" from 'Take It Or Leave It" as his coda. Wonderful — it's a sound countless North London bands have been attempting for years, though admittedly I'm biased, having been brought up on a staple diet of tacky British R'n'B in the '60s. Okay, so it may not be the future of rock'n'roll as we know it . . . I dunno though, look at The Inmates. A good record, but I can't imagine feminists being terribly amused by the words.

THE LITTLE ROOSTERS: She Cat Sister Floozie (Pye). The Little Roosters are a straightahead no-nonsense hard-driving R&B unit in the Wilko/Bishops/Heatwaves tradition and sure enough their single is a straightforward no-nonsense (well, not much) slice of hard-driving R&B about three notches tougher than The Cannibals. I rest my case, your honour. (Seriously, why do all rhythm and blues lyrics have to be so selfconsciously sexist? Authenticity? Sigh . . .)

ABC: Rhythm On The Radio (Oval). A fine single and at last a serious chart contender for Oval Records. Stylistically it could loosely be described as English pop reggae — a sort of Watching the Police Detectives on the Front Line, almost Sweet but not quite sickly. ABC used to play this one live down the Spurs in Tottenham and Ric Adams has turned out a production Basher himself could be proud of; looking forward to his next incarnation of the band (currently in preparation, we're told). Meantime will the entire Radio One playlist panel and every other programming director in the country kindly schedule this single for heavy rotation, starting yesterday. Champion the Underdog and Charlie Gillett might just have a hit on his hands.

JUDGE DREAD: Lover's Rock (Sire/Korova). Boy, did they ever pick the wrong reviewer for the Judge's new single. Me, I still remember the ignominous 'Winkle Man' with devasating shafts of wit like *"Who're you calling Sailor, I'll smack you in the gob"* and *"Yer bumburger, take that . . ."* Still, don't pay any attention to a grudge-bearing old moaner like me. It could be argued that events have finally proved Judge Dread a decade ahead of his time, making very blue beat records for obscure independent labels before the ska revival was a twinkle in Jerry Dammers' eye: a small still voice crying "Prepare Ye the Way!" in a wilderness of glam rock and heavy metal . . . But it'd be quite a argument — this record is extremely poor.

ROY SUNDHOLM: Did You Ever Have A Heart (Ensign). Well mine sank at the intro — a bastard crossbreed between showband country and sessionman reggae slithering glossily on the brink between Radios One and Two. Sundholm deserves better than this, the man's got plenty of heart himself and pours it both into his songwriting and strong, whining vocal delivery. No point going on about the mismatched production; this is an album track and in a week or two we'll be getting a fresh single made with Undertones producer Roger Becherian. Look forward to that — in the meantime don't waste your money.

TANYA HYDE: Herr Wunderbar (Waldo's). Tanya returns without The Tormentors offering us a snappy little seven-incher of wonderfully authentic teutonic disco drivel that sounds more like it came from Dusseldorf than Quest Studios of Luton. Waldo's should despatch envoys immediately to test this out on the patrons of Bangs and Legends, same as the big companies do. Maybe it will prove indistinguishable from the real thing and result in a massive gay disco smash. Stranger things have happened — ask Danny Baker.

Continues over

SINGLES

From previous page

RED LETTERS: Sacred Voices (Burning Bing Records). "Dear Reviewer, here's a copy of our debut maxi single which cost us £40 to make and we hope it makes you think nice things, yours sincerely Red Letters." It does, chaps, it does. There are records in the pile which must literally have cost 100 times more to produce and sound almost 100 times worse. Red Letters are a punky young Scottish three-piece and 'Science Has The Answer' on side two promises well for the future. The intriguingly named Burning Bing Records are at 5 Main St., Newtongrange, Midlothian.

PSYCHEDELIC FURS: We Love You/Pulse (Epic). Oy! What's this still doing in the review heap, it's been out bleedin' ages! J Peel reckons most people seem to prefer 'Pulse' (the more aggressive cut); I reckon people need their heads seeing to. 'We Love You' is one of late '79's minor classics: a straightfaced and highly unlikely shopping list of individuals, artefacts and institutions which the Furs are in love with, backed by a similarly classic 2½-chord riff churning along like Lou Reed in a good mood and yobby backing vocals calling out the refrain from time to time. Is that high jangly guitar just at the end a deliberate hint of 'Jumping Jack Flash' by way of mockery at the second hand title? Who knows — who cares? Snap it up now while it's still in the shops.

ULTERIOR MOTIVES: Y'Gotta Shout/Another Lover (Motive Music/Red Rhino). Okay, how about this one: try to imagine a young Richard and Linda Thompson backed by The B52's with an anthem for the difficult times we live in: *You gotta shout/When it's quiet/You gotta kick up a riot/You gotta scream/When it's silent/You gotta get a bit violent/If you wanna get anything, Wanna get anything done.*" Someone named Roland 77 credited as the drummer keeps an unnervingly mechanical beat throughout: the entire sound is earnestly amateur and great fun. More importantly, both songs are very catchy — found myself muttering the lyrics days after the tape had stopped. Good luck to 'em, I say.

DOUBLE STILTON & RED LEICESTER: Bound And Gagged With Lengths Of Rubber Tubin (Redbull). Well, while we're still on the subject of far-fetched comparisons, I'm sorry I'll read Cheech & Chong's Private Circus again. An EP of juvenile japes, subversive satire and tasteless lunacy which includes everything from a musical tribute to Alastair Maclean *("the finest writer in the English language since Voltaire")* to a commercial for Martin Webster Fatboy Lager *("Tvice das carbohydrate of normal biers")*. The digs at Middle America are rather weakly executed and not very funny for someone who's never been there. But what the hell, it's still a bellyful of laughs even after half a dozen plays. Recommended to Python addicts.

ED SIRRS: I Think I Think Too Much (Oval). A warm humorous debut from Ed Sirrs — another one-man band armed to the teeth with synthesisers plus his trusty Hofner Futurama and what sounds like a Roland rhythm machine. Currently touted as a man to watch, I still don't think this is the record to take him to a wider public . . . yet.

THE FROCKS: Anywhere But Here (Deviant Wreckords). Forthcoming release from one of the newer feminist labels to put paid to any chauvinistic suspicions still lurking in the minds of male readers over female musicians in general ("got no balls"/"not enough muscle" etc) and records from the Women's Movement in particular. As with Mick Dorey's record you'd never guess listening to this that there was anything remotely "alternative" about its origins — a massive, driving production of near-Spector proportions but with enough late '70s sensibility in the rhythm section and instrumentation to keep it contemporary. Lyrically the theme has already been touched on by Steely Dan and particularly E. Costello, if not explored in this depth. But what sets the record apart is its unusual vocal performance — strident, bitter, and utterly home grown: I've never heard a woman singer sound quite like this before even though one or two new waveish males have been there in the past year or two. It really comes home just how stereotyped the female voice in rock music has become: soul shouters/cutesey balladeers/mannered punkettes and Debbie Harry clones is about all.

THE FANS: Giving Me That Look (Fried Egg). Not The Fans who made 'Cars And Explosions' last year, but George Smith of the near-legendary Dragons returning with a new line-up, new sound and a new maxi-single on the improbable Fried Egg label (85, Ashley Road, Montpelier, Bristol). Title track blasts away at 50 times the NRG level of the old band, but for my money 'Stay The Night' on side 2 is the stronger track — less selfconsciously poppy perhaps, with meaty guitars to the fore. Nice one, George.

MO-DETTES: White Mice (Rough Trade). Felt suitably smug discovering this in the reviews pile, having already bought it some weeks before. Trouble is, after a dozen or more hearings I still can't figure out whether it's lightweight nonsense, oddball fun a la J. Richman, or the greatest thing since Wonderloaf. Probably a bit of each — I give up.

ARMED FORCE: Popstar/Attack (Armed Force). Half the independent records in the country seem to be made at Cargo Studios, Rochdale. Armed Force are a six-piece from Moss Side with both male and female lead vocalists, Revillo fashion. There the resemblance ends — lyrically this band are vitriol rather than cheery pop: worried myself to sleep for a whole night over the 'A' side. Muscially this record is pretty basic, rather than minimal, with quotes from the James Bond Theme and 'Shakin' All Over' thrown in as points of reference. Armed Force can be contacted via: Rob Crane, 401/52 Lingbeck Crescent, Manchester 15.

PINPOINT: Richmond (Pinpoint). Q: What's the point of having a record producer? A: To make your records sound like this:

Hi-energy powerpunk rather cleaner and punchier than Sham or the Subs, more like a venomous (and extremely funny) version of the Hot Rods at their best. Alright, I'm prejudiced towards Vic Maile as he also produced '2-4-6-8 Motorway' a couple of years ago, but I hope 'Richmond' will do equally well for Arturo and da boys this spring. It's like a savage updating of 'Dedicated Follower Of Fashion' aimed at the Bright Young Affluent Things of outer suburbia, or anywhere really, come to that. Favourite rhyme time: *"Richmond . . . where the breakfast's continental/and the cigarettes are menthol"*. Dunno what Pinpoint are like live, but Rejects/Upstarts fans should enjoy this record immensely. Prepare for a boom in Vox AC 30 sales.

PRIVATE DICKS: She Said Go (Heartbeat). According to this record, Private Dicks should know how to whistle — though even after you've bought it I doubt you'll have any more idea why than I do. A charmingly quirky song which the band themselves modestly describe as a wonderful slice of vinyl to bring the sun back into the lives of millions. Aw hell, who am I to disagree? Heartbeat Records, 4 Melrose Pl, Bristol BS8 2NQ.

BERLIN: Matter Of Time (Renegade). Damn — just written a song with that line in the chorus and now Berlin have beaten me to it. Ah well. Pleasant, if unadventurous pop — vaguely Blondie/Tourists thanks to Terri Nunn's vocals, although less of a constant backbeat to drive the song along. Focus on fact: this single was mastered direct-to-disc and whaddyaknow — you actually *can* hear the difference in sound quality.

THE DARK: My Friends (Fresh). Guitar solo of the year, no — decade, no — century must surely go to Bill from The Dark for his effortless rendition of *Crossroads*, Hank Marvin-style, amidst a fast, furious and punky number; with a twang that Duane Eddy would envy yet miraculously still fitting around the chords underneath. The song's a preposterous tribute to television with the band's tongues so firmly in their cheeks it's a wonder they still know how to breathe. The recording's rough and cheerful but I'd treasure this for the lyrics and guitar solo alone. Fresh Records: 98 Soho Market, Newport Pl, London WC2 7LA.

MONOCHROME SET: He's Frank/Silicon Carne/Fallout (Rough Trade). Not only are Monochrome Set played regularly at Tier 3 on West Broadway alongside Orchestral Manoeuvres, Banshees, et al, but this is also G. Dadomo's single of the month. Last month, that is, Me, I find 'Frank' as derivative as everyone else although the obvious 'A' side; while 'Fallout/O Sweet Everything' is altogether more interesting both musically with odd counterpoint guitar lines under the vocal, and lyrically — *"I used to roll my own but now I'm a fag . . . "* — WHAAAAT? A very disconcerting record.

RICH WILDE: The Lady Wants To Be Alone (Dead Good). Watch out for Dead Good Records (292 High Street, Lincoln): both their releases this week are worthwhile, well presented singles that demand serious attention. Rich Wilde is responsible for everything on this record from song-writing and vocals to various synthesisers and treated percussion. If the adjective "Numanesque" *(NME* contribution to the English Language for 1979) springs to mind, you could forget it again fairly quickly. This particular record is fairly adventurous, within the confines of a pop song format admittedly, but hardly intended for a mass commercial market.

In any case, Gary himself is nowhere near as awful as it's currently hip to make out: his only crimes have been the teensiest bit of posturing and vast overnight success, after all . . . any rate, regarding Rich Wilde's present single: close, but no encounter. Not yet anyway.

DR MIX AND THE REMIX: I Can't Control Myself (Rough Trade). I played this to someone who'd been in The Troggs for two years and he didn't even recognise the song. That can only be a Good Thing.

☐ Continued page 41

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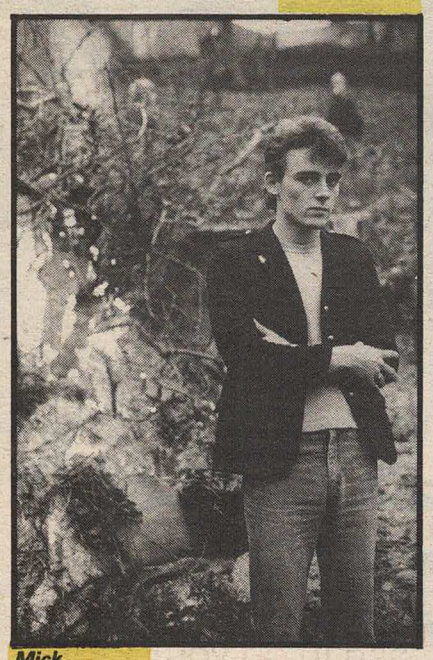

Mick McNeil

Derek Forbes

JIM KERR, troubled and thoughtful Glaswegian lead singer for the Scottish quintet Simple Minds — let's get the fire in your eyes and the whine in your voice, for a moment let's lose your unfortunate stammer, and maybe any caution.

"People have looked at the group and just said: Art School Rock. Art School Rock! We're fucking closer to bricklayers and plumbers. It's just stupid!"

Keep it up.

"They say we're moderne lads with silly eye mascara, making pointless cold music, all alienated and everything. *I should fucking think we feel alienated,* coming from the Gorbals in Glasgow where, if you weren't totally into football or girls, there was something really the matter with you, and where it was really difficult for you to do anything like music."

And Simple Minds find that superficial accusation of coldness insensitive.

"We try hard to put soul and feeling into every song we do. Passion is important, to move people."

Charlie Burchill, eager and considerate guitarist and co-writer of songs with Kerr, 'soul' and 'feeling' are not words many would associate with Simple Minds are they?

"People look at our ambition, and maybe see that we're trying to do something a little different from the rest, to do things in new ways, and they think we're trying to do something above the rest, kind of detached, that we're not one of the boys. But in order for music to progress you must take steps forward. . .

Through all this we've always had a slight tongue-in-cheek attitude, there's a lot of humour in our songs. But people tend to want to put you into a convenient box."

Master Mind Jim Kerr

THOSE INVOLVED in rock'n'roll, who blithely create and confirm the prejudices that indulgently set solid the limited traditions of rock and clumsily hinder how the majority of us react to and receive music, have made an incidental art of tagging and filing away. They love slipping things into those old and tattered boxes, keeping things tidy and under control. This silent movement was especially quick to tuck Simple Minds into that box of dissenters over there in the corner, the one that's sloppily marked 'pretentious', 'naive', 'derivative', 'unoriginal' — the one that Gary Numan is illuminating with his halo of fame. And as Numan's technical expertise has been severely underrated, so too has the determined adventure and rapid growth of Simple Minds been ignored.

Simple Minds are mischievous. Simple Minds are tenacious. Simple Minds are self-conscious. Simple Minds are vulnerable.

They are conscious of rock's prejudices and traditions that interfere with any new attempts to contribute unorthodox and unexpected experiences to an increasingly complex, and in many ways increasingly reactionary, rock culture. Prejudices and traditions that upset the development of a natural communication, that feed off the fear of new dance, discussion, danger. The same old labels and dismissals are always introduced.

Simple Minds, it's frivolously said, 'sounds like' Roxy Music. Or Magazine. And if their new single 'Changeling' is some kind of hit the name of Numan will be used as an irritant.

These comparisons emphasise how little people actually listen to music these days, how reticent they are to move past surface shine and scrape a little deeper.

"I wish there was a decent title, much as I don't like them, for representing these types of group like Roxy, Magazine and us. Like when you get two R&B bands, you don't compare the sound of the R&B bands, you look at them both and you say *that's* R&B. There should be a reasonable title to use."

New title. Another box. But often it seems the only way: fight boxes with boxes.

Simple Minds' 'roots' are not the accepted, true rock'n'roll lineage — the Berry/Stones/Beatles/Who drift. Minds come from the manner and music of Roxy Music, Brian Eno, Doctors Of Madness, Van Der Graaf Generator, Ultravox, David Bowie and John Cale. The people who in the early '70s were erratically stirring darkness, disgrace and melodrama into a mixture of psychedelia, torch, cabaret and electronics and making noises that shocked and repelled.

The influence of these elegant and/or eccentric early '70s explorers weaved its way through the stormy punk period and has emerged lately as the purest and sharpest form of inspiration.

These musicians' arbitrary and abstract methods of composing, the extravagance of presentation and premise, the bold claims, the diversity and dissatisfaction of the lyrics, the constant fallible need for experimentation, is beginning to mean more and more as rock speeds forward. Pick a few contemporary vitals, anything from pop corn to grim fairy tales, XTC to Joy Division, Skids to Talking Heads, Human League to Cabaret Voltaire, and it's the shadow of Bowie and Eno that hangs over them rather than Berry and Townshend.

Many mourn or moan. Art within the context of rock'n'roll! It embarrasses or amuses many. Who cares! I see what I see!

What is it in the music of Roxy, Van Der Graaf, Cale, Eno, even patches of Genesis ("There was always a menace behind their music with Gabriel, it was never just far out hippy stuff") that attracted Kerr and Burchill?

Kerr: "Oh, I don't really know. It's just a natural thing that happened. It's not something you pick out and say why. I still don't really know what Roxy's 'Bogus Man' is about, but the atmosphere I get from that is great."

Burchill: "This kind of music takes your mind out further. It's trying to take steps ahead in rock music generally, into unknown areas. For example when listening to Brian Eno, you suddenly realise he's taking steps out there. Compare it to the desert: nothing happens out there, no one wants to go there, and it's the same with music really. There are areas where no one will go near, they feel it's unappealing or too unusual, they feel uncomfortable. This type of music moves out there. In that respect I would say we *are* like those bands. We want to go out there."

THE DEVELOPMENT of Simple Minds has been a wild one, creating comparatively few ripples, messed with fearful rock accusations such as hype, pretension, greeness. . .The closest Simple Minds came to recognition was as pink and precious wonder boys who had it too easy.

Early on, as Johnny And The Self Abusers

Continues over

Paul Morley listens sympathetically to the misunderstood Simple Minds. Sensitive portraits by Pennie Smith.

From previous page

MORE MINDS

fiddling about in the paradoxically comforting punk swell, they made a scrappy jokey single for Chiswick records. And as we now know, people always remember where you've been. After that, they settled down, added a keyboardist, became Simple Minds, and looked for a sound and a challenge.

They were determined to avoid the sickly swamp of the London music scene, and so concentrated on working from Scotland and attracting, perhaps mistakenly, major label interest from there. That they could be busy and work up a following without needing to venture South proves the advantage of the latterday decentralisation.

But the disadvantages. . .

"We started to get rave reviews early on, which is a danger, because the thing with local writers is that if they see something close to them that they think is good they tend to blow it up out of proportion. Writers tend to be patriotic, and if you get young bands coming up now you somehow associate where they are with what they are, it seems to be quite important for some reason.

"But we'd always gone out of our way to steer clear of any Scottish nationalistic thing, but we became known as Scottish, and somehow people see Scottish things as being primitive, uncouth. We always tried to play the local thing down. Apart from anything else we don't feel that we are a Scots band or a Glasgow band. We are just a group. It doesn't seem right to stick Glasgow with Simple Minds."

Simple Minds, with a seductive flamboyance and strong purpose of mind, attracted enough favourable local response to convince a handful of major labels to go and see what the fuss was. The group, having had an unhappy experience with the poorly organised Chiswick, wanted the benefits of major label promotion, but also the freedom of independence. But in coupling the Edinburgh Zoom label with Arista, the group all but lost out both ways.

After signing with Arista following months of hard work performing and sorting out their sights and sound, their problems were just beginning — the trivial problems of rock'n'roll business swings and roundabouts that matter because they put a block on the music, discolour character and harm the spirit.

"We signed straight from the pub thing in Glasgow, we came straight from that to a big label. Then we got a chance to do the *Old Grey Whistle Test*, and people must've thought: what the fuck's this. A band we've never heard of going on the *Old Grey*?

"But what were we supposed to say? Were we supposed to say no?

"The producer Michael Appleton had decided to change the programming, to change the direction and have on newer bands just off the street. He'd heard our tape, liked it and wanted us on the show, and before we did it we knew that it was going to be a real big number. But it was something that we had to go through with.

"And then we went straight into the Magazine tour, and we were already getting the Magazine soundalike tags, even though we'd got our sound before we'd even heard 'Real Life'. And we went on this tour with no LP and no single. . .and we got out there and really there seemed to be no pressure on us and we just went out to enjoy ourselves.

"So our first LP came out midway through the tour and it went straight into the charts at 29 or something and that was without the Hopes, the Peelies, the London press; and everyone thought type, which was a word that used to kill us. It was all just accidents. We wanted the small thing, we went out of our way to avoid gimmicks and everything. . ."

Despite this unusual, noisy sort of build-up, the band ended up fairly faceless.

"Faceless is the wrong word. We did have a face but it wasn't our own. It was the face of four or five other bands.

"We did come down south totally green and naive to an extent, because we didn't want to get involved with the whole charade. . .but we had people coming up to us at gigs — and it was really bad because we wanted an image of our own — and they were saying: Well, I heard you were like Magazine, Bowie and Ultravox! So I came along."

SIMPLE MINDS first LP 'Life In A Day' wasn't particularly strong, which didn't help. A momentary place in the charts, a committed *NME* discussion, but the record was a serene collection of interesting songs worn out by time and blandly decorated with fastidious studio obviousness. A tantalising opener, but limp and lacking in individuality.

By the time it was released the group were far ahead, and while criticisms of plagiarism were partly justified because of the sound on that LP, the stage the group had reached deserved far more careful consideration. The group are honest in their appraisal of that record.

Kerr: "We didn't use the keyboards very subtly or cleverly. . .the LP has got this really embarrassing sound. When you're in the studio for the first time it's the first time you really get to hear yourself, and through the studio speakers you hear this really big powerful sound and you think it's great. But that's daft because anyone could put more and more in, it's knowing what *not* to put in.

"We were overawed as well. We were just playing about, messing with influences but not having the power to bring ourselves out, and the sound was just an everyday gloss job.

"Someone said it was a coffee table album, real background music, and that really hurt. Because I don't want to do that, I want to put out something that really stands, that just doesn't hang there."

Did you feel that you were lightweight?

"To an extent. We knew we could be much harder. Everyone in the group can play really well (Burchill, Derek Forbes, Mick McNeil, Brian McGee and Kerr) and we listen to lots of good music. Obviously something has to come out of it. We just had to chop things down and look out ourselves and really think. The production on the new LP is really telling."

AFTER JUST a few months of the distorting, disrupting 'big time' Simple Minds almost seemed caught in the flow, quickly eroding: trapped and fading. They could have drifted along and no one would have noticed, but they felt a need to move forward.

Burchill: "I need to take risks. I want to move into the other areas because I believe in the other areas."

And needing to record masses of new material they had accumulated they moved into Rockfield to assemble the second LP. Wiser, more mature, determined to use the machinery rather than be used. Heavily in debt, pressurised on all sides by the conflicting reputations they had collected, their attitude was that they had nothing to lose and so didn't consider safety first.

The group that made the exciting, extreme 'Real To Real Cacophony' LP was far removed from the outfit that contrived 'Life In A Day'.

Apart from the advancement of material and imagery in the songs, the new pushy cohesion of the unit, the major reason for the wide

Continues page 41

FLUFF ON CAPITAL

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THE CONCISE NME GUIDE TO ELECTRONIC MUSIC & SYNTHESISED SOUND

By ANDY GILL

Kraftwerk at Hammersmith Odeon 1975 Pic: Steve Emberton

"Progress in the physical and mechanical sciences determines a progress in art."

— Carlos Chavez, 1957.

THE above quote from Chavez, though undoubtedly true, only goes part of the way.

In reality, of course, a plethora of other factors — political, historical, philosophical, economic — tend to stick their oar in when we get to art; and where a particular art-form's tenaciously linked to the sphere of commerce, as is the case with pop music, the picture tends to get a little blurred — and downright dirty in places.

Chavez (a composer, by the way) was referring specifically to the growth of electronic music; and now, a couple of decades and an ironed-out economic factor later, his words are coming home to roost — with a vengeance.

It seems like only yesterday that Walter Carlos sprung 'Switched On Bach' on an unsuspecting rock audience, and now everywhere you care to look (or listen), you'll find the synthesiser elbowing its way in. There's no getting away from it, and it's not going to disappear if you stick your head in the sand.

Sooner or later, we'll all have to come to terms with the fact that, despite its inferior posing quotient, the synthesiser may eventually challenge and supplant the guitar as the most common instrument in pop music.

Already, after little more than a decade of commercial production, a small, self-contained synthesiser like the Wasp is, at a bare couple of hundred quid, cheaper than most popular makes of guitar. Couple this to its ease of operation and vastly superior capabilities, and the writing starts to materialise on the wall.

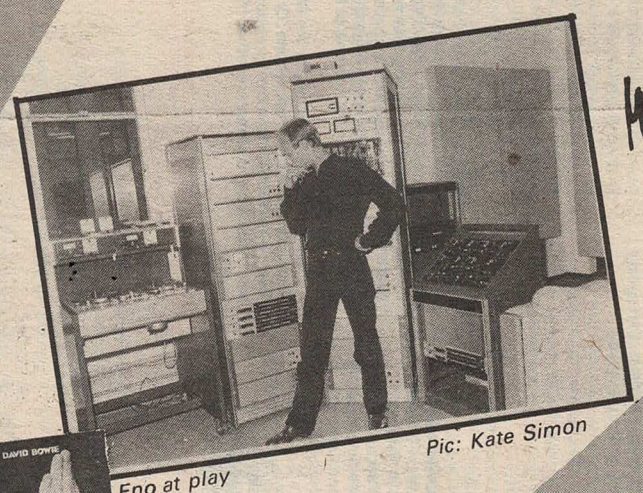
This frightens a lot of people, but then so has every revolution. The sheer speed with which the synthesiser's stamped itself on modern music has caught more than a few napping, writers and musicians just as much as the legendary consumer-in-the-street. Whilst masses of historical precedents exist to assist in the differentiation and categorisation of guitar styles and the like, what happens when we leap from the limited timbral range of the guitar to the almost unlimited possibilities of the synthesiser? What can we use as bearings? How do we orient ourselves? Just *where* do we start?

Right *here*. Over the next two weeks, the *NME's* offering you an unrepeatable chance to come to grips with the wild and wacky world of synthesisers, as seen through the eyes of a technical inept who rates ears above ohms and amperes. This week's centre-spread combines with next week's to form an aesthetic circuit diagram, an outsize overview covering everyone from Gary Numan and The Chipmunks to Stockhausen and Pere Ubu, in which influences are traced, precedents set, and connections made with important non-rock (and occasionally non-musical) factors.

Before explaining any more (and bearing in mind Chavez' dictum), a brief historical rundown of important technical developments might help to acquaint you with some of the diagram's underlying themes . . .

AT THE heart of all electronic music is the **oscillator,** or electronic tone generator, a device invented in 1915 by one Lee De Forest. It's the oscillator which actually produces the basic sound, the unsculpted block of noise, and on its own it's of fairly limited application, varying only in pitch and amplitude.

Eight years later, Leon Theremin produced an oscillator whose pitch and amplitude were controlled not by knobs and switches but by the spatial relationship of the performer's hands to a protruding antenna. This device, the **Theremin,** proved quite popular with some rock bands in the pre-Moog mid-'60s — you can hear it on the Beach Boys' 'Good Vibrations' and Zep's 'Dazed And Confused' — probably because of its possiblities for flamboyant operation. The "Lothar" of Lothar And The Hand People was a Theremin.



Eno at play Pic: Kate Simon

1929 saw Givelet and Coupleux invent the first primitive sequencer, a kind of player-piano synthesiser which consisted of four oscillators controlled by punched-paper rolls. This development prefigured the use of computers with synthesisers (modern sequencers can store hundreds of notes and churn out endless riff-cycles of quite superhuman complexity at the push of a button — so much easier than actually *playing* the riff over and over again).

The single most important invention of the century, in musical terms, was the **Magnetophone,** the first tape (as opposed to wire) recorder, invented in Germany in 1935. This opened up vast new areas, especially in compositional procedures such as tape-splicing, speed-changing, etc, all of which are accepted as commonplace today and utilised with varying degrees of success across the entire music spectrum.

These early developments were the tools of the first electronic composers, as well as the building blocks from which was constructed the synthesiser we know today; using these fairly primitive devices, the composers built up a wide vocabulary of techniques and sounds which owed little to traditional notions of "the musical" and "the non-musical". New instruments demand new rules.

It was not until 1944, however, that the first *real* synthesiser was constructed, by Cross and Grainger. Besides an oscillator, the synthesiser also needs some form of **filter** (to modify the sound) and an **envelope generator** (to shape the sound). Once Cross and Grainger had linked these functions, anything was possible. Electronic studio-complexes sprouted in Paris (RTF) and Cologne (WDR) in the '50s, the decade culminating with Olsen and Belar's completion of the state-of-the-art RCA synthesiser in 1959.

The drawback to these studio-synthesisers is obvious: no way can you lug roomfuls of delicate machinery round from gig to gig, to say nothing of the miles of connecting leads. These were highly-sophisticated but *permanent* installations, cumbersome and complicated, and what live performances there were needed extensive preparation, days of bespoke engineering.

What was needed was an off-the-peg synthesiser, which is where Dr Robert Moog enters the picture. Working along lines suggested in 1961 by Harald Bode, a young engineer who'd built equipment for the WDR studio, Moog designed and built in 1964 the world's first modular synthesiser system, for Herbert Deutsch.

A year later, one Paul Ketoff produced the first portable voltage-controlled synthesiser, the "Synket", pipping both Moog and Donald Buchla to the post. Unfortunately for Ketoff, Moog and Buchla soon had a market duopoly, Moog eventually attaining household-name supremacy, fame and fortune.

WHICH just about brings us up to date. Since then, the major advances have been the reduction of both size and price, and the development of the polyphonic synthesiser, which enabled chords to be played: a somewhat dubious achievement, in that it treats the synthesiser as just another keyboard instrument.

Which leads me back to the diagram. It'll hopefully be apparent to the more sharp-witted among you that some bands use synthesisers and some bands make electronic music, and that the two aren't necessarily one and the same. In the diagram, I've tried to separate the two approaches — electronics on the left (this week), synthesisers on the right (next week) — taking into account the *mode of application* of the machine in each case. For instance, many German bands use synthesisers, but in a manner which owes more to the principles of *electronic* music composition than to *keyboard* music.

In a nutshell, those on the left view the synthesiser as a means of obtaining otherwise-unattainable sounds, whilst those on the right see it as a short-cut to somewhere they've been before.

Simple, eh?

Finally, a word of thanks to Barry Everard, Pete Hartley and Geoff Travis, for information, and a note of indebtedness to two books: David Ernst's invaluable *The Evolution Of Electronic Music,* and Joachim Berendt's equally invaluable *The Jazz Book,* without all of whom this diagram would have been a lot smaller. The completely biased, dogmatic and prejudiced views espoused in the text and connections are my own. They are also correct.

In Next Week's NME
Part 2: SYNTHESISERS
From ELP to Gary Numan and back again, plus your chance to win a Wasp synthesiser

ELECTRONICS THE CONCISE NME PRINT OUT PART ONE

Conducting factory hooters 1922 Russia.

ART

MUCH of what is today considered wild and wonderful in music can be seen — when viewed with a little historical perspective — to be little more than a kind of interdisciplinary retread of ideas which first surfaced in the European art movements of the first couple of decades of this century. Even before artists like Oskar Schelemmer and Laszlo Moholo-Nagy had performed pieces of modern music at the **Bauhaus** in the 1920's, the **Dadaists** and **Futurists** had done much of the conceptual groundwork for the early electronic pioneers. The Dadaists are reasonably well-known for their influence on John Cage's aleatoric procedures (his integration of chance elements and construction of sound-collages), and even as late as 1958, Gyorgy Ligeti was utilising the "cut-up" technique many mistakenly attribute (via David Bowie) to William Burroughs.

The Futurists are less well-known, but their music — 'Bruitism' — was even more radical. Fedele Azari's 'Aerial Theatre' (1918), for instance, experimented with the musical possibilities of airplane engines (!), and as early as 1913 Luigi Russolo (who described the concert hall as "a hospital for anaemic sounds") had invented a noise-machine called the *Intonarumori* and performed pieces consisting of grunts, pops, hisses, squeals and thuds. Russolo's "line-note" system of notation, incidentally, is still used by many electronic composers.

HIGHBROW STUFF

ORIGINALLY, the use of electronic tone-generators in music was the province of what are euphemistically known as "experimental composers", figures like **Pierre Schaeffer, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Luciano Berio, Luigi Nono, Edgar Varese, Gyorgy Ligeti, Olivier Messiaen, Pierre Boulez, Pierre Henry, John Cage** and **Ilhan Mimaroglu.**

To make a massive generalisation, all these composers had been heavily influenced by the revolutionary work of **Arnold Schoenberg** (inventor of serialism, or twelve-tone music) in the early decades of the century, and had developed a range of techniques which lent themselves well to electronic equipment (although the invention of the magnetic-tape recorder was probably at least as important a development, for them, as the synthesiser).

Schaeffer, for instance, besides founding (with Henry) the first centre for tape composition (1949), originated the technique of *musique concrete* (the utilisation of source-material usually considered non-musical), although he was unaware of the Futurists' earlier experiments with noise.

Cage, of course, is famous for his musical adaptation of the Dadaists' random cut-up technique; less well-known, though, are the non-random phonetic cut-ups of Berio, who used a chunk of James Joyce's novel *Ulysses* dissected into phonemes in 'Thema' (1958). **Steve Reich,** most accomplished of the group of minimalists that includes **Terry Riley, Philip Glass** and **Lamonte Young,** uses a similar technique for 'Come Out' (1966) and 'It's Gonna Rain', on which the repetition of fragments of a tape-looped phrase reveals hitherto unnoticed rhythmic and phonetic complexities.

"Pure" electronic music, using eletronic sound generators and modifiers rather than "natural" sounds, started in Germany in the early '50s; of those who used the studios at WDR Koln, the best known is Stockhausen. Although famous for his totally electronic pieces, like 'Kontakte' (1960), Stockhausen's most ambitious projects were his attempts at producing a "Universal Music". The first of these was 'Telemusic' (1966), which married electronic sounds with folk-music elements from ten countries. The following year, 'Hymnen' went one stage further, using national anthems from all parts of the world. More recently, Chrysalis made a valiant attempt to sell Stockhausen's music to a rock audience with 'Ceylon' (1976). It failed.

Another attempt to reach rockers with "serious" electronics was Pierre Henry's inauspicious collaboration with the abysmal Spooky Tooth, 'Ceremony' (1969). Not surprisingly, there have been few other attempts since, and the interested (broadminded) rock fan still has to proceed by trial and error. One of my errors was **Charles Dodge's** 'Earth's Magnetic Field' (1970), a fry little number which uses Kp indices of the earth's magnetic activity to determine pitch, register, dynamics and tempo; quite possibly the most boring record I've ever heard, but that's the risk you take with systems music. Interested parties are more likely to find satisfaction in the Stockhausen pieces, or in some of **Morton Subotnick's** stuff.

Finally, a quick mention for the **BBC Radiophonic Workshop,** whose 'Dr. Who Theme' probably did more to popularise electronic sounds than any other piece of music.

EARLY ELECTRONIC ROCKERS

THE record which initiated the "electronic rock" era was undoubtedly **The Beach Boys'** 'Good Vibrations' (1966), on which the high whine of the Theremin was a focal point.

Over the next few years, "funny noises" began to crop up all over the place, from **The Rolling Stones'** '2000 Light Years From Home' (1967) to the **Grateful Dead's** more extensive experiments on 'Anthem Of The Sun' (1968) and 'Aoxomoxoa' (1969) and **George Harrison's** one-off 'Electronic Sounds' (1969). **White Noise's** 'An Electric Storm' was a surprisingly popular ground-breaking album, though 'White Noise 2' fared worse.

Of the groups for whom some form of electronic tone-generator was more an integral element than an occasional gimmick, the most well-known (and commercially successful) were **Hawkwind,** who purveyed — with varying degrees of artistic success — a *zeitgeist* mixture of drug-oriented hippie idealism and science-fiction, basing their songs round endlessly repeated riffs of steam-train subtlety, and presenting multi-media shows of quite ambitious scope. Later years have seen the band become more musically interesting and (humorously) self-aware.

Less well-known but more interesting are several American electronic combos who flourished at the tail-end of the '60s. **Lothar And The Hand People** had a Theremin ('Lothar') and a Moog in their line-up, and on their first album 'Presenting . . .' (1968) — produced by Tonto's **Robert Margouleff** — dealt with many of the currently-fashionable obsessions of latter-day synth bands, on songs like 'Machines' and 'Sex And Violence'. On 'Space Hymn' (1969), however, their engaging electronic pop was drowned in a flood of hippie-dippie mysticism, and they sank without trace.

The **Silver Apples** were drummer Dan Taylor and electronics operator Simeon (who called his equipment "The Simeon") and they were the forerunners of the modern electronic garage-bands, producing nervous, throbbing rock'n'roll of remarkable tension and energy, something like a cross between Can, the Velvets and cajun music, if you can imagine that. The Simeon consisted of nine oscillators and attendant controls, and was played in a manner similar to the pedal steel guitar — lead and rhythm oscillators played with hands, elbows and knees, and bass oscillators played with the feet. Both 'Silver Apples' and 'Contact' are deleted, but well worth searching for. Debbie Harry's favourite group, or so I'm told (but don't let that put you off).

Fifty-Foot Hose were more po-faced and less successful. Their 'Cauldron' was top-heavy with obtrusive synthesising and the desire to initiate bad trips.

Best of the lot, though, were **The United States of America,** who used a custom-built Byrd-Durrell synth, ring modulator and echo units, and electronically modified *everything* — drums, violin, the lot — whilst still retaining the essence of rock'n'roll. Led by composer Joseph Byrd, who had in 1963 organised the UCLA New Music Workshop, their album 'The United States Of America' (1968) reflected his interest in contemporary compositional methods and kitsch American brass-band bombast as a metaphor for American consciousness.

In 1969, Byrd formed **Joe Byrd And The Field Hippies** and made 'The American Metaphysical Circus', an album in similar vein, but less dominated by electronics. Due to lame marketing techniques, Byrd was never the (popular) success he should have been, and he eventually went back to more "serious" projects, producing in 1975 an album of synthesised Christmas carols, 'A Christmas Yet To Come', which realised, in Carlos-esque fashion, the sonorities of the original instruments employed in the historical periods in which the carols originated.

Early Hawkwind

SEASTONES

THE 'Seastones' album, made in 1975, was one of the more interesting of the Grateful Dead offshoots. Composed by **Ned Lagin** and performed by him with the help of various members of the West Coast music mafia, it bears more resemblance to Highbrow Stuff than to rock, and came as quite a shock to obsessive Dead-heads, despite Phil Lesh's obvious interest in that area.

GERMANS

Kraftwerk

THE SINGLE most important group of synthesiser users, both musically and influentially, are the crop of German bands that appeared during the early '70s.

In that Germany was the first "home" for electronic music in the '50s, this is not without justice. Drawing more, perhaps, from these roots than from the alien rock'n'roll culture, they contributed to rock a variety of suggestions and possibilities which have already radically affected vast areas of today's music (and the thinking *behind* the music), and whose influence will, I think, make lasting changes on the music of the '80s. As always, when the Germans muscle in on a genre, the genre gets transformed.

The scope of the Germans' approach to synthesisers is immense — from long, open-ended improvisations which utilise the unequalled timbral resources of the instrument, to rigid rhythmic pieces which make use of its capacity for sheer technical precision. Of the former style, **Tangerine Dream** are easily the most important exponents.

Their work is characterised by very gradual timbral transformation and overlaid layers of sound, usually improvised, with distinct leanings towards Gothicism and Gnosticism (their penchant for gigging in cathedrals comes as no surprise). It's an ultra-soporific mixture, and there remains some doubt as to whether anyone has actually consciously *heard* the closing minutes of a Tangerine Dream or **Edgar Froese** album.

'Phaedra' (1974) was the album which brought them to wide public attention, a work of monumental beauty or boredom, depending on your point of view, on which they said all they really have to say. It's not "rock" music — their intentions lie more in the "serious" classical area (although Froese's 'Stuntman' (1979) has some refreshingly light-hearted moments), as do legions of other dreary, po-faced compatriots, best-known of whom is the dreadful **Klaus Schulze.** No-one need own more than one Tangerine Dream album ('Phaedra'); no-one need own *any* Klaus Schulze album . . .

At the other end of the scale are **Kraftwerk,** mindful purveyors of robo-rhythms for the mindless masses. Although their earlier albums, which revealed the influence of such as Cage, Stockhausen and Riley, were comprised mainly of long, semi-improvised pieces, the essential pulse of the later Kraftwerk was already in evidence.

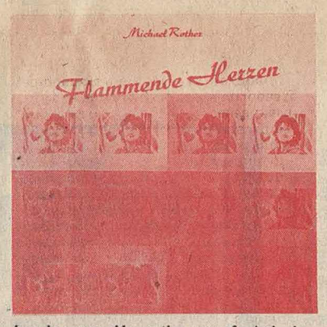
With 'Autobahn' (1974), the classically-trained **Ralf Hutter** and **Florian Schneider** expanded both the band's line-up and its horizons, eventually developing, with the indispensable 'Trans-Europe Express' (1977) and 'The Man-Machine' (1978), a conceptual superstructure which not only strengthened, but *justified* the impeccable rigidity of their music as merely one facet of an artwork which, by referring back deliberately to the Constructivists of the '30s, makes a somewhat subtler aesthetic and political analysis than is usually thought the case. And which is, incidentally, quite without par in rock music, Residents aside.

Both for their realignment of music as part of a larger overall structure, and for the considerable influence they've exerted on (amongst others) David Bowie and Giorgio Moroder, Kraftwerk are without doubt the most important German group currently in existence.

Neu! are less well known than either Tangerine Dream or Kraftwerk, but their achievement is nonetheless considerable. Of all the modern German bands, they were the most sympathetically responsive to the alien rock'n'roll culture, producing, on their third (and last) album, 'Neu '75' (1975), a unique blend of rock energy, Floyd-esque soundscaping and Kraftwerkian repetition which was to become the blueprint of the "motorik" style of David Bowie (and others) a few years later. Criminally overlooked, 'Neu '75' is something of a freak occurrence worth going through hell and high water to obtain.

The two brains behind Neu!, **Michael Rother** and **Klaus Dinger,** went on to pursue their separate musical visions, Dinger forming the lacklustre **La Dusseldorf** with the two drummers from Neu!, and Rother recording a series of solo albums which utilise a similar multi-overdub layering technique to Neu!, but which lack the earlier work's energy. Nönetheless, as examples of sublime psychedelic muzak, 'Flammende Herzen' (1977), 'Sterntaler' (1978) and 'Katzenmusik' (1979) are unbeatable; comfortingly *stable* albums whose progressions are rigorously logical.

Similar, but less successful, are **Cluster,** best known for their collaborations with Brian Eno on 'Cluster & Eno' (1977) and 'After The Heat' (1978). Like the Eno of 'Music For Films', they indulge in short, mainly pastoral pieces of whimsy, their longer works — such as 'Grosses Wasser' (1979) tending to overwork slim ideas to tediousness. Compared to the other



bands covered here, they are of relatively minor importance.

Out on a limb, as regards German music, are **Can,** who have produced the most successful attempt thus far at making the "Universal Music" of Stockhausen's dreams, by fusing the diverse talents of a rock guitarist, **Michael Karoli,** and a free-jazz drummer, **Jaki Liebezeit,** with a synth/keyboard player, **Irmin Schmidt,** and bassist, **Holger Czukay,** who were once students of Berio and Stockhausen, and by investing their work with a clear awareness of a variety of ethnic musics (cf. the tongue-in-cheek 'Ethnological Forgery Series' collected together on 1976's 'Unlimited Edition').

At once primitive, accomplished and exploratory, the Can "style" is largely due to Liebezeit's instantly recognisable cyclical drumming, which serves as the basis for long, rhythmic (usually hypnotic) improvisations, during which Schmidt may karate-chop his keyboard or draw great curtains of sound from the synth. Whatever the result, they are never less than absorbing.

Schmidt, who started out on organ, is one of the most stylistically varied of synth-operators, each album investigating a different textural range, sometimes akin to ethereal strings (as on 1973's 'Future Days'), sometimes to marimba (as on 1975's 'Landed', a grossly neglected work).

In 1976, Czukay moved from bass to a battery of electronic equipment, though any change his move may have made to the band's sound was nullified by the acquisition of bassist **Rosko Gee** and conga-player **Reebop,** and Can's consequent slide into a semi-funk doldrums. Czukay left the band shortly afterwards, but has since rejoined. 'Soundtracks' (1973) is a collection of their film music.

Out on a limb with Can, but markedly different from them, were **Faust,** who in their short life-span of four or five years opened more doors for rock music than anyone, Zappa and Beefheart (possibly) excepted. Indeed, so incalculable is their influence that any account of their work must fall short of what they deserve.

This being the case, I'll merely mention that Faust fused together elements as disparate as rock, electronics, jazz, musique concrete and folk by a variety of methods from all strata of the spectrum of anarchy and order, and were the least compromising to the pre-ordained rules of British and American rock'n'roll, approaching its construction with a refreshingly primitive outlook.

Of their four albums, 'Faust' (1971) and 'Faust So Far' (1972) are the most completely realised; these are shortly to be reissued by Recommended Records, and should be acquired with all speed.

There are battalions of lesser-known, less important German synthesiser users, the majority of whom reflect the lamentable influence of Tangerine Dream and co-bore Klaus Schulze; there's little point in mentioning them here, save to point out that former T. Dreamer **Peter Baumann's** 'Trans Harmonic Nights' (1979) is a far less stodgy enterprise than most.

Can

THE MODERN DANCE

ONE of the most interesting developments in modern rock'n'roll is the resurgence of interest in electronics and synthesisers as sources of sounds not obtainable by other means, a reaction against the notion of synth-as-keyboard which characterised Pomp and threatened to throttle the instrument's potential.

Moreover, it's indicative of an attitude which isn't restricted to synth-users, but finds wider application in the sound-as-sound (as opposed, to sound-as - product - of - instrument) doctrine of such as **This Heat, The Residents** and **The Art Bears,** rock bands who, in the tradition of Can and Faust, feel free to draw on a variety of sources and techniques and apply them as *they* see fit. As This Heat say, "All channels open . . ."

The ramifications of this, with respect to synthesisers, are positive, far-reaching and irreversible: in a nutshell, no longer is (keyboard) technique an important — or even necessary — factor in operating a synthesiser. All that's needed is a rudimentary knowledge of how the thing works, and a bit of imagination. No longer are synthesisers the province of the "talented" musician, and no longer — with the advent of the £200 machine — the province of the *rich.*

Just as record production has been ruthlessly demystified by the small labels, the synthesiser has become the first demystified instrument. Think about it . . .

Not only does the consumer gain access to a variety of musics not sanctioned to the profit-conscious multinationals, he also gets the chance to be *more* than a consumer.

To give them due credit, **Pere Ubu** were largely responsible for popularising the use of synths as sound-generators; their synth-operator **Allen Ravenstein** attempts, symbolically, to represent the sound of the brain in Ubu's total body-music by inspired use of whines, bleeps and white noise: so simple, yet so effective, and neither cold nor boring. For, although they make use of constructions not normally attempted in straight-ahead rock'n'roll, they've produced some of the most savagely danceable music of all time, and some of the most unnerving. 1978's 'The Modern Dance' is the most vital album of the decade. Period.

DANCE

New York duo **Suicide** are less adventurous, but also serve to demonstrate that electronics doesn't necessarily equal sombre alienation, by matching simplistic instrumentation with breathy, edgy vocals which hark back to early rock'n'roll. They're not too dissimilar to The Silver Apples, but less successful. Given New York's penchant for art-rock, it's perhaps surprising that they weren't followed by whole loft-loads of imitators.

San Francisco, in contrast, has spawned at least three bands of prodigious potential, all of whom — as representatives of the new San Francisco "underground" — are featured on the 'Subterranean Modern' album (1979). First and foremost are **The Residents,** annonymous bizarros who exist at the juncture where humour meets mau-mau aural politics, a juncture where anything is not just possible, but probable. The synthesiser for them is just one of hundreds of instruments, many of which are home-made, and, like Faust, their real importance lies outside the scope of this exercise.

T. Gristle
Cabaret Voltaire

Chrome mix electronics, heavy rock, tape collage, musique concrete and science fiction imagery to produce some of the most violent rock'n'roll ever to emerge from America. Despite using elements which originated in "serious" experimental music, they avoid appearing po-faced by applying these elements with a primitive, dynamic charge. The essence of rock is *spirit,* remember.

In contrast, **Tuxedomoon** use sinuous, swaying musical textures combined with offbeat application of guitar, violin and sax to create atmosphere of unease and disillusionment. Not unlike Terry Riley with a dose of urban paranoia; tenderhook music.

In Britain, the growth of electronic garage-bands has been rapid and wide-ranging in influence, to the point where **Mark Beer** can make records which sound like Loudon Wainwright with synthesisers(!).

Throbbing Gristle and **Cabaret Voltaire** are perhaps the most well-known, though there are distinct differences in their approach. The former, built on the headline-grabbing activities of bassist/artist **Genesis P Orridge,** reflects his obsession in the nasty products of humanity, investing their work with totalitarian connotations and using barrages of noise to represent blind, unstoppable *power* at its most ruthless.

Though cleverly conceived and executed (no pun intended), the TG concept is nothing more than the manipulation of old-hat ideas, latter-day Futurism without innovation — which is quite a paradox, when you think about it. Not only did the Futurists experiment with noise; they glorified machines, strength, war and power, were unflinchingly right-wing, and helped create the atmosphere which led to the rise of fascism. Many, many years ago. Orridge may be a brilliant self-publicist, but his ideas are second-hand.

Cabaret Voltaire, on the other hand, are shy and reclusive, shunning publicity sideshows and working in isolation. And despite the Dadaist origin of their name, they disavow the notion of themselves as artists. Unlike TG, their work is original, exploratory and accessible, and displays an emotional subtlety similar to Ubu's on their 'Mix Up' album (1979).

Besides electronics, they make wide use of secondary treatments, tape collage and musical concrete, harnessing the whole to a drum-machine plus — a mixture which can produce some aggressively driving rock music, as the definitive single of the genre, 'Nag Nag Nag' (1979), ably demonstrates.

The use of the drum-machine as substitute for the real thing is rapidly increasing. **Second Layer's** beautifully simple, beautifully effective two-chord terrorist thrash 'Courts Or Wars' (1979) is one of the better recent examples, and the singles of **Metal Urbain** (various members of which now operate as **Dr Mix** and **The Metal Boys**) exhibit exemplary use of the instrument in creating electronic punk of startling energy. Theirs is just about the only French rock'n'roll of the past few years worth hearing, a statement which also applies to Holland's **Minny Pops,** a partially-successful outfit who mingle unpleasant noises with tongue - in - cheek humour.

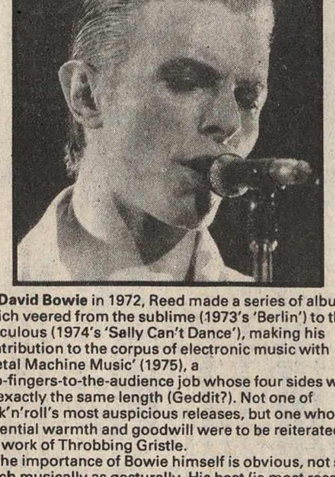
Finally, a mention of **Thomas Leer, Robert Rental** and **The Normal** (aka **Daniel Miller**), pioneers of the solo DIY single with, respectively, 'Private Plane', 'Paralysis' and 'TVOD'/'Warm Leatherette' (all 1978), which demonstrated the wide range of uses to which synthesisers could be put, as well as showing that *it can be done alone.* 'Paralysis', in particular, is magnificent — a powerfully discomforting abstract piece which communicates at a level beyond words, cutting straight through to submerged emotions. Brilliant.

What's *your* single like?

GLAM

Though the Glam-Rock boom of the early/mid '70s was effectively done to death in 1976/7, the influence exerted by its leading protagonists can be seen to have had a more lasting effect than punky Winston Smiths whould have one believe.

The accepted precursors of glam were **The Velvet Underground,** expecially **Lou Reed,** the World's Most Arrogant Corpse. After mouth-to-mouth resuscitation by **David Bowie** in 1972, Reed made a series of albums which veered from the sublime (1973's 'Berlin') to the ridiculous (1974's 'Sally Can't Dance'), making his contribution to the corpus of electronic music with 'Metal Machine Music' (1975), a two-fingers-to-the-audience job whose four sides were all exactly the same length (Geddit?). Not one of rock'n'roll's most auspicious releases, but one whose essential warmth and goodwill were to be reiterated in the work of Throbbing Gristle.



The importance of Bowie himself is obvious, not so much musically as gesturally. His best (ie most recent) albums are not so much individual artistic creations as barometers of taste executed with an admirable ear for the *zeitgeist:* 'Station To Station' (1976) is little more than a retread of 'Neu '75', whilst the trio of Bowie/Eno collaborations display the art of brain-picking at its most skilful — which is not to say that they're bad albums, just that the faint odour of cynical contrivance is difficult to dispel.

Not that this really matters, of course; Bowie is the Gilbert & George of the music world, the perfect embodiment of Quentin Crisp's dictum about "style is all". And Bowie, you'll agree, is a veritable stencil of style, a processing plant which transforms art (Penderecki, Egon Schiele, Kraftwerk) into chic; a *Readers Digest* precis for the plebs.

Hence his gestural importance, as patron and populariser of (maybe) otherwise arcane talents, and as exemplar of the arty attitude. Which may not have much to do with synthesisers, but which has plenty to do with those components in the bottom corners . . .

The same goes for **Roxy Music** after **Brian Eno** departed, except that instead of the arty attitude, fans were/are likely to indulge in guttersnipe jet-set mimicry, now the province of Disco ('Angel Eyes' = no surprise). For a band founded on a blend of experiment and style, the loss of the experimenter leaves little of substance.

Eno himself is one of the great populariser of the synthesiser, and, despite his frequent disavowals of his own "musicianship", one of its most accomplished users. He is also — and this is equally important — the greatest promoter of a certain culturally aware/intellectual approach to music in the rock field, drawing much attention, via his Obscure label, to the accessibility of much avant-garde stuff, besides introducing certain unorthodox techniques and principles into mainstream rock with his "pop" albums.

Like many German synth-users, he studied under an experimental composer— in his case, **Christian Wolff,** a contemporary of Cage's. Eno is concerned with electronic effects not so much as an end in themselves, but as structural determinants, an interest which has led him into areas of conceptualism, systems music, and eventually "automatic" music, such as 'Discreet Music' (1975); this interest is also well in evidence on the two Rileyesque Fripp & Eno collaborations, 'No Pussyfooting' (1973) and 'Evening Star' (1975).

His best work, however, is to be found on 'Music For Films' (1979), a series of brief, mood-encapsulating vignettes similar to — but superior to — the work of Cluster, with whom he's also collaborated.

Though much-maligned at times, Eno is, to all intents and purposes, the father-figure to many latter-day electronic bands, and some acquaintance with his work and ideas is essential to an understanding of current musical trends.

Silver Screen Special

CHARTS

Box Office Big 15

1= Moonraker (United Artists)
1= Superman (Warner Bros)
3. Jaws 2 (CIC)
4. Every Which Way But Loose (Warner Bros)
5. Alien (20th Century Fox)
6. Watership Down (CIC)
7. The Deer Hunter (EMI)
8. Grease (CIC)
9. Quadrophenia (Brent Walker)
10. Pete's Dragon (Walt Disney)
11. Midnight Express (Columbia); **12. National Lampoon's Animal House** (CIC); **13. Death On The Nile** (EMI); **14. Porridge** (ITC); **15. The Cat From Outer Space** (Walt Disney)
(c Screen International. Film House, 142 Wardour St, London W1)

NME's Big 15

1. Blue Collar (Directed by Paul Schrader)
2. Apocalypse Now (Francis Ford Coppola)
3. Eraserhead (David Lynch)
4. Nosferatu (Werner Herzog)
5. Days Of Heaven (Terrence Malick)
6. The Chant Of Jimmie Blacksmith (Fred Schepisi)
7. The Deer Hunter (Michael Cimino)
8. The Hardcore Life (Paul Schrader)
9. Quadrophenia (Franc Roddam)
10. Scum (Alan Clarke)
11. Manhattan (Woody Allen); **12. Invasion Of The Body Snatchers** (Phil Kaufman); **13. Providence** (Alain Resnais); **14. Martin** (George A. Romero); **15. Halloween** (John Carpenter)
(Compiled from listings by Max Bell, Angus MacKinnon, Charles Shaar Murray, Neil Norman, Ian Penman, Paul Rambali, Monty Smith, Neil Spencer and Bob Woffinden)

Roddam's Quadrophenia and (inset) Clarke's Scum

GREAT BRITONS: Despite the success of two outstanding films — **Scum** and **Quadrophenia** — 1979 proved that there's still no such thing as a British film industry. Films like these — raw, vital, alive — get made against enormous odds and completely go against the grain of Wardour Street's notorious introspection (give 'em soft core porn, pop pulp and *Confessions* 'comedy'). And once directors like Allan Clarke and Franc Roddam have proved themselves, they get whisked off to Hollywood by contract-waving combines to give the American scene a shot in the arm. Peter Yates and John Schlesinger have been lost and now Roddam and Clarke have joined new recruits Ridley Scott and Alan Parker 'over there.'

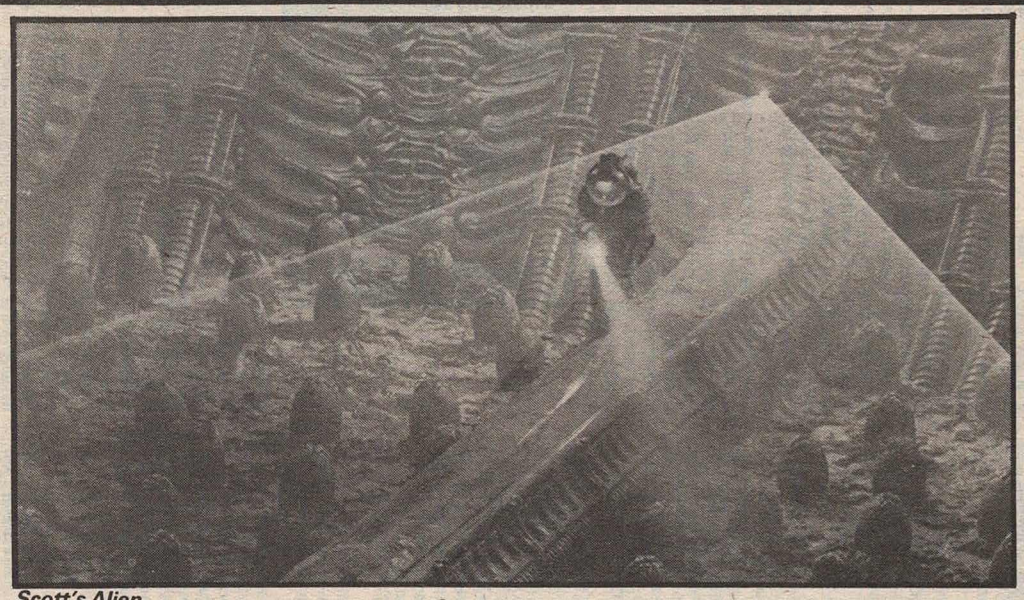
At least Chris Petit's **Radio On** proved that an uncompromising British film could still be made in this country, even if he had to go to Germany for half the finance. British films to look out for in 1980 include Nicolas Roeg's first movie since **The Man Who Fell To Earth,** the bizarre **Bad Timing,** a graphic study of a mutually destructive sexual relationship between Art Garfunkel and Theresa Russell, Ken Loach's engaging and totally unpatronising children's adventure **Black Jack,** *Sweeney* veteran Tom Clegg's **McVicar** starring Roger Daltrey and Brina Gibson's pop world saga **Breaking Glass,** starring Phil Daniels, Jonathan Pryce and Hazel O'Connor.

MALCOLM McDOWELL sees the New Year in by, appropriately enough, dipping into the past and the future simultaneously. Confused? You won't be after you've seen this episode of H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine,* otherwise known as **Time After Time,** in which McDowell's Wells tracks down Jack The Ripper in present day San Francisco. Past and future mingle cosily in other 1980 productions: besides the promised rash of medieval movies (including Ridley Scott's **Knight** and Steven Spielberg's **Raiders Of The Last Ark),** there's the inevitable SF undertow — Ray Bradbury's **Martian Chronicles,** Mike Hodges' **Flash Gordon,** David Cronenberg's **Scanners** and even as an SF rock musical, **The Apple,** set in 1994 — and an equally predictable list of sequels **(Superman 2, Phantasm 2, Star Wars 2 — The Empire Strikes Back** and **Omen 3 — The Final Conflict).** From more diverse sources, movies of note could well be Sam Peckinpah's **The Texans** (from a script by John Milius), Joseph Wambaugh's **The Onion Field** (directed by Harold Becker and featuring extraordinary performances by James Woods and John Savage), Don Siegel's **Escape From Alcatraz** and **Rough Cut** (shot in London with odd couple Burt Reynolds and David Niven).

Schrader's The Hardcore Life

Schrader's Blue Collar

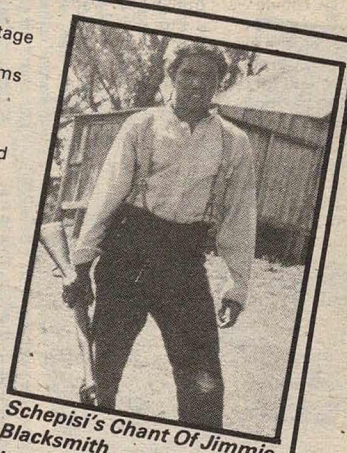
REBELS WITH A CAUSE: After a couple of false starts — Arthur Penn, John Frankenheimer and Sidney Lumet in the early '60s, Martin Scorsese, Francis Ford Coppola and William Friedkin in the early '70s — the American New Wave is finally with us. Not that the aforementioned have not made fine films, it's just that they were, at the time, inextricably involved with the Hollywood system. Now, besides Coppola (a law unto himself), there are five young directors working independently of the majors. Their finished films may be picked up for distribution by the biggies, but at the time of shooting they're following their own heads. Paul Schrader (writer of **Taxi Driver** and **The Yakuza)** is perhaps the most interesting. Both **Blue Collar** and **The Hardcore Life** are bleak cries of despair in a Hollywooden wonderland of special effects and disasters, dealing as they do with real people in melodramatic situations and subjects like work and conscience — things you don't make movies about. John Carpenter, George A. Romero and Brian de Palma make the kind of films that always seemed to be staples — suspense and horror — but with ingredients either lost (enthusiasm, skill) or added (cynicism, black humour). All three rival Hitchcock (Sir Alfred to you) for sheer manipulative power: Carpenter's **Halloween** was a tour de force in sustained tension, Romero's **Martin** and **Zombies** would scare the pants off the most jaded cinephile and although de Palma came a cropper with the hopelessly convoluted **The Fury,** he's returned to the small scale with a black comedy, **Home Movies.** The busy Carpenter has two offerings for 1980: **The Fog** (starring Jamie Lee Curtis from **Halloween)** and **El Diablo.** Perhaps the most heart-warming success story of the year was David Lynch's admirable **Eraserhead,** an utterly unique nightmarish vision. His reward was to land **Elephant Man,** the true story of a hideously disfigured man in Victorian London. From making a creepy underground cult movie for a budget of three and a half quid to directing a cast of the calibre of Anthony Hopkins, John Hurt, Anne Bancroft and John Gielgud in one bound is no mean feat. And Lynch's aren't made of clay. Otherwise, watch out for Steven Spielberg's **1941** (though even he admits it's a mess), Friedkin's **Cruising** and Scorsese's last chance, **The Raging Bull** (starring Robert De Niro). And keep your fingers crossed that they don't all fall prey to Hollywood's money machine: Michael Cimino's western epic, **Heaven's Gate,** is a mere 12 million dollars over budget. It had better be good.



Scott's Alien

SF: Space dust continues to settle gently on the film industry's wild romance with science fiction, and 1979 produced an accordingly mixed bag in the vein. **Star Trek: The Motion Picture** and Walt Disney's **The Black Hole** both slumped to a new lowest common denominator, fecklessly yielding all power to the special effect — never mind plot, psychology or any but the most specious philosophy, here's the matte projection. Ridley Scott's shock-obsessed **Alien** and Phil Kaufman's startling remake of **Invasion Of The Body Snatchers** both carried themselves on a wave of '50s-style "There's something nasty out there — it could be a monster, more likely a Communist" paranoia. Aided enormously by the brilliant design work of H. R. Giger and Ron Cobb, Scott sacrificed almost everything for atmosphere and environmental detail, whereas Kaufman concentrated on turning present-day San Francisco into a nightmarish end-zone overrun by 'pods', giving us one of the nastiest spookings in years as he did so. Peter Hyams' **Capricorn One** was perhaps the strongest play in this pack — not strictly SF, but positively and effectively speculative whilst it unveiled a high-powered conspiracy to fake an American Mars shot. In general though, science fiction on film has yet to come of age, or to rival Stanley Kubrick's **2001: A Space Odyssey** for sheer audacity of conception and execution. Perhaps Ridley Scott's **Dune,** still in pre-planning, will prove the genre adult instead of patronisingly adolescent.

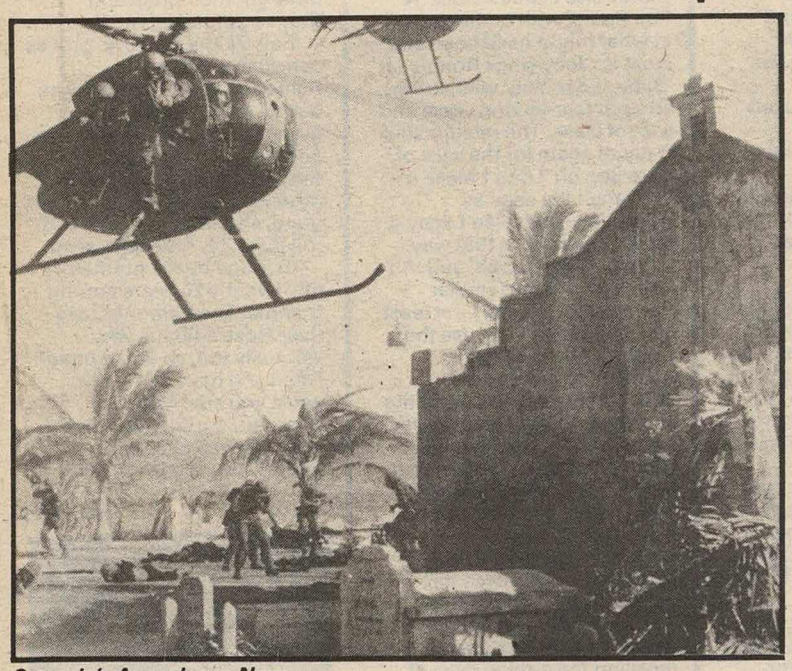
AUSSIES: This wasn't a vintage year for the Australian film industry; its financial problems are still severe. Peter Weir, director of the eerie **Picnic At Hanging Rock** and the oppressive **The Last Wave,** had to restrict himself to telefilm after the inexplicable failure of **Wave** to roll either here or in America: a sorry state for the country's most accomplished film-maker to find himself in. Compensation came mainly in the form of Fred Schepisi's scouring **The Chant Of Jimmie Blacksmith,** an intense, committed film that outraged Australian audiences with its unapologetic reminders of how cruelly and hypocritically the Victorian colonists had treated the land's Aboriginal inhabitants. More significantly Dr. George Miller's racy **Mad Max,** an action-cracked vision of a lawless, car-crazy Australia in the not too distant future, gave the industry its first tangible success in the all-important American market. Although not strictly a '79 film, Philippe Mora's brusque **Mad Dog** made a brief but welcome appearance on British circuits, Dennis Hopper playing up to and over the hilt as a Ned Kelly-like outlaw in late nineteenth century Southern Australia.



Schepisi's Chant Of Jimmie Blacksmith

The Silverest Screens of 79

ANGUS MacKINNON and MONTY SMITH suss out the celluloid year: the successes, the trends, the pretenders and the offenders.



Coppola's Apocalypse Now

APOCALYPSE NOW: it's impossible to know how posterity will judge **Apocalypse Now**, but for the moment Francis Ford Coppola's withering perception of the Vietnam war as some latterday soul desert in which men and morality were utterly estranged stands as a monument to the director's courage and conviction in completing it at all. Impossible also to over-emphasise the visual, dramatic and philosophical scope of the film as it ranges over its troubled terrain, presenting us with anything from a dangerously exhilarating massed helicopter attack to a hellish otherworld of myth and mysticism in its closing stages. Few films have been such a total experience, and riveting performances by Martin Sheen, Robert Duvall and, especially, Marlon Brando can only open the first of numberless metaphysical doors that Coppola's opened — **Apocalypse Now** demands to be worked on, to be seen again and again. Its central character, Colonel Kurtz, represents nothing less than the total failure of the modern man-machine to come to terms with his primitive past. Coppola has presented us with a lesson we *must* learn, and his achievement in doing so is awesome. Without a doubt, the film of the decade.

Cimino's The Deer Hunter

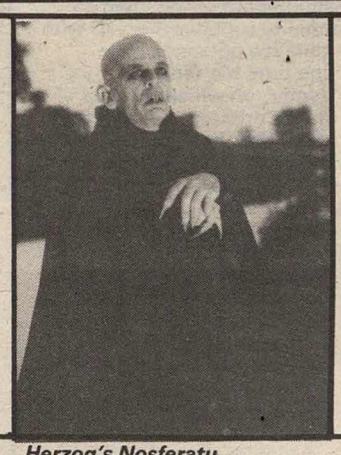
THE DEER HUNTER: The first of the year's two Vietnam films — the expected flood of celluloid on the subject never materialised — **The Deer Hunter** concentrated on the home front, painstakingly and intimately observing the private vices and virtues of a group of second-generation Russo-Americans, all of them just about yer average Joes, steel workers in a grimy Pennsylvania town until they were drafted. Director Michael Cimino, previously known mainly for his work with Clint Eastwood on **Magnum Force** and **Thunderbolt And Lightfoot**, proved himself well able to extract an emotional maximum out of a strong cast, Robert De Niro and the late John Cazale in particular. His use of dramatic symbolism, this in the form of two repeated motifs of deer-hunting and Russian roulette, was extremely effective, even if his anbiguous attitudes towards the Vietnamese left something to be desired. An ambitious film, **The Deer Hunter** must have exorcised the nagging ghost of the American 'Nam experience from many of its U.S. audience. For those of us who weren't there, it simply told an extremely moving story of men far overtaken by events.

Carpenter's Elvis

MUSICAL MUSH: The cinema hardly ever gets rock and roll right and 1979 was no exception. Only **Quadrophenia** hit the correct note of sheer desperation, but that was a music film by default. Of the more traditional biopics, **The Buddy Holly Story** and **Elvis — The Movie** were both lily-livered efforts and the director of the latter, the usually estimable John Carpenter, must've cursed himself for becoming involved in such a dodgy proposition. It was nostalgia time, too, with Milos Forman's ill-conceived but oddly engaging **Hair** and Jeff Stein's straightforward Who documentary **The Kids Are Alright**. This year's batch will include such oddities as the Village People starring with Valerie Perrine in **Can't Stop The Music** (directed by comedienne Nancy Walker), Neil Diamond as **The Jazz Singer** in Sidney J. Furie's remake of the Al Jolson classic (!) and a movie version of the Johnny Paycheck song, **Take This Job And Shove It**.

Rudolph's Remember My Name

THE ALTMAN INDUSTRY: 1979 saw maverick American director Robert Altman's independent Lion's Gate production company offer no less than six films. Altman's trilogy began with **A Wedding**, a slight but sometimes sharp and always charming comedy of current American manners, and ended with **A Perfect Couple**, a harmless piece of fluff that would have fared better without its snufflings around a totally anachronistic rock band. In between this comfy pair came **Quintet**, extreme Altman after the manner of **Images** and **Three Women**. At worst a magnificent failure, **Quintet** depicted a claustrophobic and loveless near-future society collapsing under the combined weight of a new ice age and its own inertia; Altman's ability to sustain mood and symbolism — everything multiplied by fives — has rarely been so compelling. Amongst his proteges, Alan Rudolph's **Remember My Name** and Joan Tewkesbury's **Old Boyfriends** were both gripping psychological dramas, the former distinguished by a chilling performance from Geraldine Chaplin and the latter spoilt by Tewkesbury's inconsistent overhaul of Paul Shrader's original script. Robert M. Young's entertaining **Rich Kids** rounded off Lion's Gate's menu, a wry glance at growing up and feeling reasonably fine.



Herzog's Nosferatu

DRACULA MOVIES: The year's rash of Dracula films should have come as no surprise after all the post-**Omen** spillings of blood and bile in recent years, but nobody could have been prepared for German director Werner Herzog's extraordinary **Nosferatu**, a dream-curdling retelling of the vampiric tale with the manic Klaus Kinski staking (sic) a strong claim to be the cinema's most complete Count, an ageing, melancholy but unspeakably callous harbinger of death, plague and destruction. John Badham's straightforward, reserved **Dracula** appeared feeble by comparison; Frank Langella proved a suave but impotent villain, Sir Laurence Olivier wrapped himself around another of his ludicrous foreign accents and one just felt like cursing everybody for not packing themselves back home to Transylvania for the duration. Even **Love At First Bite**, a tongue-in-cheeker that dived into New York discos for its main courses, seemed preferable.

Ritt's Norma Rae

WET LIBERALS: Last year it was Hal Ashby's overwrought **Coming Home** that salved the self-inflicted wounds of cinemagoing wet liberals everywhere, and 1979 saw two more attempts by Hollywood to gloss important issues and pump medication into persons of a sensitive and caring disposition. Martin Ritt's **Norma Rae** was especially disappointing. Following the tracks of the tears of a young woman in the American deep South as she tried to emancipate both herself and the non-unionised employees at the local cotton mills simultaneously, the film resorted to pitiable stereotyping and melted drama into melodrama at every turn. James Bridges' **The China Syndrome** made a similar mess of the pros and cons of nuclear power. Its topicality and a fraught performance by Jack Lemmon as the manager of a troubled nuclear plant aside, **Syndrome** reduced itself to the level of carping propaganda, playing safe for easy villains and obvious shocks. Both films were anaemic in the extreme.

Python's Life Of Brian

LOONY TOONS: What with Woody Allen going all serious and sophisticated (although **Manhattan** did, thank God, have about 83 more laughs in it than **Interiors**), sheer comedy hoo-doo had a lean time of it. But the Monty Python mob came up trumps with their ludicrous **Life Of Brian** (special Oscars to Michael Palin's huge repertory of characters and to Eric Idle's Mr. Cheeky) and American whizz kid John Landis didn't do too badly in the poor taste stakes with **National Lampoon's Animal House** (in which British audiences discovered the comic brilliance of John Belushi). Landis' earlier **Kentucky Fried Movie**, a messy amalgam of revue-type sketches, had its moments. too, and made it into the Box Office Top 20. Right behind it in the year's takings were, significantly, the double bill of Mel Brooks' **Blazing Saddles** and **Monty Python And The Holy Grail**, re-released for the umpteenth time and still raking it in. Otherwise, it's the TV spin-offs: **Porridge** last year, **Rising Damp** this. Ronnie Barker and Leonard Rossiter deserve better than to be fobbed off with cosy sit-com re-treads.

Harvey's Eagle's Wing

WESTERNS: Although the Western, once the staple of American cinema, has fallen from grace at the box-office, this hasn't stemmed the steady flow of imaginative, offbeat films in the genre. 1979 brought us Alan J. Pakula's **Comes A Horseman**, a long, eloquent epic about a three-way love tangle in 1940s Montana and an overwhelming widescreen evocation of an era that saw the final collapse of the old white American way; cows and cowpokes made way for oil and industry. Pakula's use of a vast, expansive landscape to underline mood and emotion was exceptional, as was British director Anthony Harvey's in **Eagle's Wing**, a story set down Mexico way some hundred years earlier that centred on the struggle between a fur trapper and an Indian brave for possession of a magnificent stallion. The actor's second shot at direction, Jack Nicholson's **Goin' South** was altogether less reverential. A stumblebum comedy set in Texas after the Civil War, It punctured sagging myths about the period with acuity and affection.

ALBUMS

1-9-9-9 Phil 'N' Da Brudders Do Just Fine

THE RAMONES
End Of The Century *(Sire)*

THE Ramones versus Phil Spector, or the Wall of Sound meets the Wall of Sound? Well, for some people the idea of this irresistible force colliding with that immoveable object probably amounts to little more than desperate business acumen, a boardroom marriage not a heavenly one. They're the cynics.

The rest of us have to agree that ignorance is bliss and succumb to history. 'End Of The Century' could be explained in terms of an inevitable connexion; America's leading exponents of artless popular punk face off against the establishment's first rebel, now an establishment superstar, the gun-totting paranoid tycoon of teen. Tom Wolfe translated it best though: it's not the words, it's the beat.

It's the brats. Can it really be four years since The Ramones turned CBGB over, made the Roundhouse literally burn? Yup, 1-2-3-4- years. Phil Spector doesn't think so small; his rock and roll yardstick is cut with myths not months: The Bob B Soxx, The Ronettes, The Rolling Stones, downhill with The Beatles, a long nothing, The Ramones . .

So you can bet your life that no one was doing anybody *any* artistic favours when this project took off. Spector may be financially secure but his ego has always been in need of re-upholstering. And The Ramones? Despite their reputation, they've yet to make any kind of impression on the inspiration behind their brand of leisure-loving, trashy, post-Watergate pop — the great sprawl of conventional record-buying Middle America.

Apart from considerations of its place in the pantheons of the beast, 'End Of The Century' is most definitely make or break time for everyone concerned because if they can't get up those radio charts with Spector in command then The Ramones, like The Dictators before them, are destined to be remembered as a New York phenomenon: the first boys out of the new wave cage and they still can't get themselves taken seriously; this generation's Ventures or Kingsmen, a Nuggets band with a good track record. Rock and roll always forgets.

Shucks though, let's not think too much on that. Right now 'End Of The Century' looks very good indeed. Once you've come to understand the eccentricities of the combination it's easy enough to believe this is the best thing they've ever done, first two albums included.

Both parties concerned show their age and their roots on the opening 'Do You Remember Rock 'N' Roll Radio' which comes replete with a jock talkover that ought to have been maintained as a motif to the spirit. The Ramones are assisted in their memory test by Steve Douglas' rootling sax and a roll-call of such figureheads as Murray the K, Upbeat and Ol' Moulty (massed yeas) just to prove that Captain America wasn't all the culture these brudders enjoyed in their youth.

Spector's state of the art dynamics are generally more effective on the tracks where the band dictate the style. 'I'm Affected' sounds like absolutely prime time Stooges, a sickly lament recorded in a cavernous space. Quite apart from the technical specifications, Ramone appeal has actually been enhanced by that old Phillies gumbo though according to the credits its mostly Boys Together Outrageously. Douglas' appearance is a cameo and only Barry Goldberg adds keyboards elsewhere; there are no Hal Blaines, Jim Gordons or Gene Pitneys left to cheat the mix.

And even the most stalwart Ramones lover will be surprised at the delicacy and, uh, casual sophistication of their road song grouch at manager Danny Fields: *"Danny says we gotta go/Gotta go to Idaho/But we can't go surfin' cause it's 20 below"*. Spector treats it like a Shirelles Christmas song until a symphony of Joeys, Dee Dees, Markys and Johnnys assume overdrive. The return of the power chord.

Or try the definitive version of 'Chinese Rock', a heroin addict's seedy lament that comes minus the smacked out conceit of past editions. It's so naive it hoits.

The apocryphal 'Return Of Jackie And Judy' (punks and runts) and the self-evident 'Let's Go' return to vintage stomping grounds, introverted as usual, wistfully depressed and blissfully funny; Ramones groupies bite back and only The Ramones could Ramoan about not getting to Vietnam. Genuine bad taste.

Side two echoes 'Rock 'N' Roll Radio' with another peek at what might have been and what is: Joey sings Ronnie on 'Baby I Love You' with strings, straight tear-jerking vocal and a lot of class. The relationship is equal again for the sake of pure pop on 'I Can't Make It On Time': life seen as experience and it isn't Joey's fault, he was born that way.

'This Ain't Havana' and 'All The Way' are the familiar Ramone worldview — at least it's consistent. They use the prerogative of checking themselves at frequent intervals but the splices of the past lose nothing in intensity. It's only a pity that they have such little competition in the field since Handsome Dick had to drive a yellow cab to eke out his living.

Speaking of which, 'High Risk Insurance' closes the proceedings with a street fighting strafe right out of Iggy's 'Raw Power' tree, recalling the golden days of American seventies punk *before* CBGBs became a tourist trap, a looney tune fuelled on that famous high energy you used to read about but were probably starting to disbelieve since second-rate outfits like Blondie started cleaning up. The Ramones have got their pride and they're gonna defend it.

'End Of The Century' proves conclusively that The Ramones are certainly not as dumb as the people who gravitate towards The Knacks and Cars of this world, all those lousy lame bands who threaten to queer the pitch for good, stupid, funny rock and roll insanity, American style.

To judge by the premature title (what's 20 years among friends), The Ramones take their Nostradamus very seriously too, so you'd better listen and have some fun while you can. Make a prophecy come true with the ultimate wall of sound. Nuthin' but hits from here on in.

Max Bell

"Sheena is a what?" Phil picks up some future shock, 1965.

THE CONTORTIONS
Buy The Contortions *(Ze Records)*

LIGHTBULBS flash dutifully o'er our heads, signifying but an insufficient brightness. We go sleepily about our business. Flashbulbs slash daily at our eyes, fulfilling narcissism. As the speed of youth-cultural life rapidly increases, we search ever more vainly for newer subjects to be turned into newer stars.

Sting, for instance, splashed dreamily into our pool: he is a natural. This means — and definitions shall henceforth be shorthand, thumbnail outlines — that his (the) face's appeal is not easily confined within one aesthetic marketplace. This *natural* face is multi-faceted and openly readable, a deceptive paperback.

But to turn to pun for a moment, we might notice the sophist in sophisticated and resolve to be wary of purely superficial stylisations. But style cannot be broken down into isolated parts — it is defined more by their relationship: it is design that kills.

So to James White, a casualty.

James White — he appears to have erased the previously alternative 'Chance' surname — is our man to put deliberation back into *naivete,* an instamatic face fated to be well publicized whether or not his various musical projects have any worth whatsoever. But are the two inseparable?

'Buy The Contortions' consolidates what has only previously been reputed, but still doesn't begin to do much other than niggle attractively — more so than the James White and The Blacks 'Off White' LP — and reiterate one central aim: to transplant spaces and times from fast funk (George Clinton, James Brown) into an ever speedier, loosely r'n'r structure. James has heard the signs moving in the soul fold, enumerated them, traced their configuration and . . . what's gone wrong?

That the soul sign is a *sensuous* idea and that James would seem to have been born of as well as in an incubator — if you're getting warm then it's more than twice the temperature experienced during 'Buy'. James' style owes a lot to falsely induced increases in metabolism and, taken purely and simply as such, can be quite appealing of a night or two. But it is a style he has submerged himself in to the expense of all other considerations.

The music is quite alluring in a very riffy, itchy way, sounding like a Devo pretending to be appalled by soul instead of rock, a metallic cocaine be-bop featuring lots of discreet doodles and few surprises — again, a Devo-style music that sounds like the exercise of some obscure 'private' function. The personality of this music is obsessed with *avoiding* any statement of aims and desires

James reaches heights of internal psychological discourse on songs like 'I Don't Want To Be Happy', 'Twice Removed' and 'Throw Me Away'. One has learnt to not expect a *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* from the majority of rock musicians (which is not to say soul or reggae are exactly consistently articulate), but I'd rather a yesterday's positivist see than the sort of forced nihilist behind such gems as *"I only live on the surface/I don't think people are very pretty inside,"* and — James' New Year mesage for us all — *"I don't believe in a better world."*

James doesn't express the lack — of interest, hope, feeling, anger, etc — with which he is seemingly possessed, but the lack of terms to express it. His terms of opposition are in fact accomplices; disinterest is catching.

In case you're wondering about The Contortions, it seems they don't exist. 'Buy' was "Produced Composed Arranged Mixed By James White" — which of course leaves one glaring omission, the small matter of who *played* it. I suspect that the 'Buy' Contortions were sacked at some point by his nibs, and so it could be some small legality that prevents, etc, etc.

Here's looking at you, kidgloves!

Ian Penman

JANIS IAN
Night Rains *(CBS)*

FIRST the vital question — has marriage cheered up our ever-ailing heroine and caused her to cease spilling teardrops on the Steinway? On the evidence offered by 'Night Rains', her first post-nuptial statement, the answer is most definitely "No".

The most introverted of singer-songwriters, Ian has rarely appeared to be walking back to happiness and here she continues on her usual melancholy way, her only nod in the direction of the land of sunshine being 'Lay Low,' a mild slice of rock'n'strut which really doesn't indicate any great identity switch, containing as it does, lines such as *"Empty beds and mornings sure get lonely"* and *"I can't find a friend on whom I can depend"*.

So far, so sad. But then, if one is willing to offer a shoulder to cry on, then nobody supplies the H2O with quite the potency of the one-time Ms. Fink. Her 'Jenny', on which she and Chick Corea share the solitude of a studio, has the impressionistic charm of a Debussy etude, while 'Fly Too High' is equally appealing, sounding for all the world like one of Duke Ellington's happy-go-lucky vocals, even though the co-writer credit is that of Giorgio Moroder. Happy-go-lucky did I say? Well, not really. Janis is really whispering in someone's ear about trying to forget. Only the rhythm smiles a while.

A similar state of affairs is apparent on 'Have Mercy Love', which has Clarence Clemmons booting in best Barbieri fashion as Ian throws herself off the top of the nearest music-stand, declaring: *"Don't leave me, love, have mercy, love, I only ask a kindness. I've fallen into darkness"* etc., etc.

But even this odd mixture of the sad and the sock-it-to-'em wins out, as do most of the other tracks on the album, the exceptions being 'Here Comes The Night', (no, not the one from Van's book of chorus songs), which is plain dreary, and the opening 'Other Side Of The Sun,' an obvious tilt at a single, fashioned with the aid of Albert Hammond, the latter being so pretty-pretty that you fear for its very existence in a strong light.

But eight out of ten isn't at all a bad score. So, though the box of Kleenex lies empty upon my floor, you still take it that Janis and I are going steady, new hubby notwithstanding. Unrequited love's a bore? "Pshaw" and similar expressions!

Fred Dellar

STRING TRIO OF NEW YORK
First String *(Black Saint Import)*

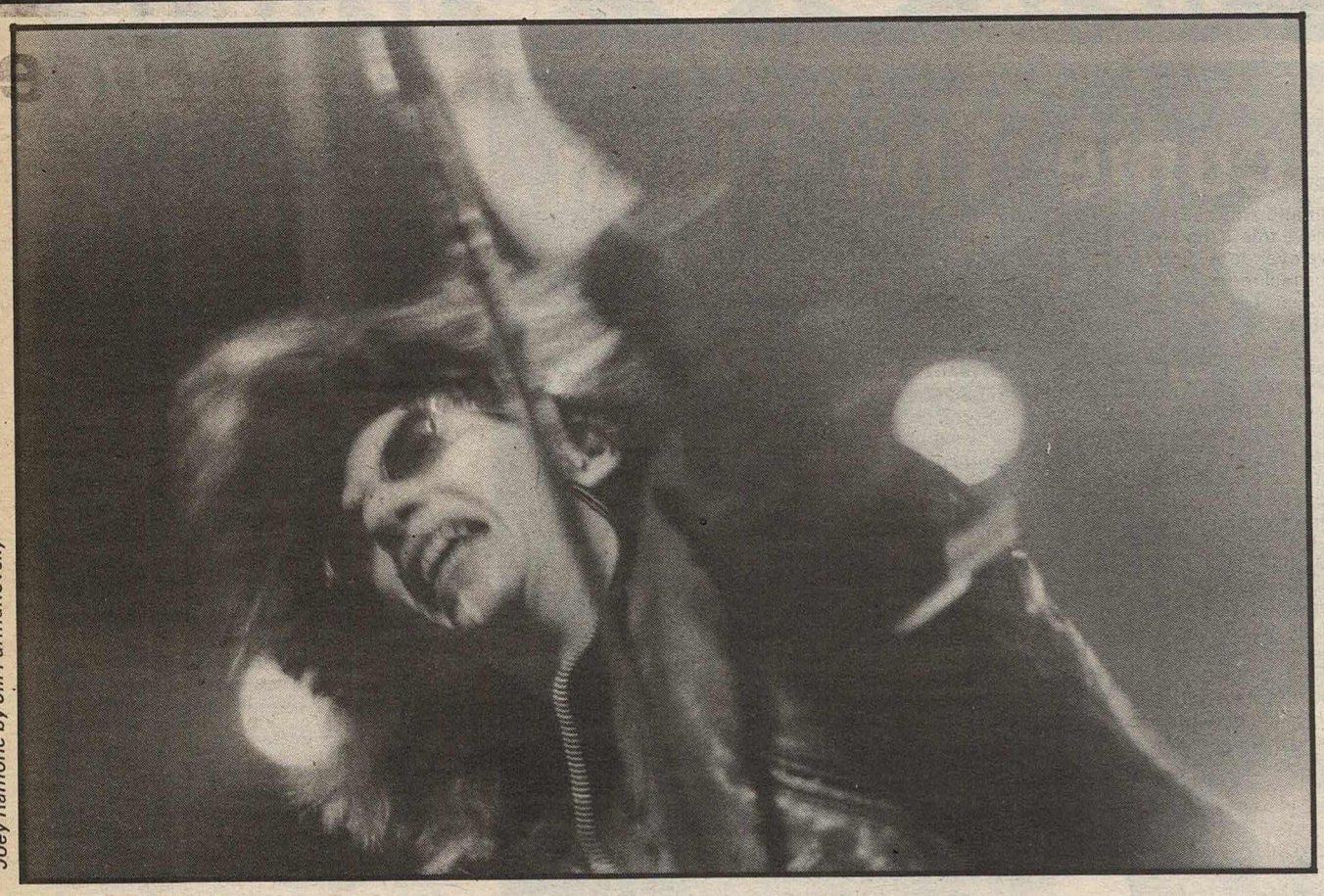
VIEWED live, string players often belie the sedate reputations of their instruments: furrowed brows give way to the bug-eyed flailings of the closet maniac. Studios usually induce a more cloistered approach. This is a mix of two extremes, a little too manicured in parts but the players work hard at dismissing visions of palm court players desperately trying to be funky.

Individually: violinist Billy Bang runs the gamut from starch-collared sweetness to drunken barndancing; James Emery (guitars) is primarily a melodist, touches of flamenco and a tip of the plectrum to Django. Bassist John Lindberg buzzes around his partners like something nasty hidden in the undergrowth.

It's Lindberg's long 'East Side Suite' which dominates. The mocking solemnity of some sections is shrewdly

Chrome's by Pennie Smith

ALBUMS

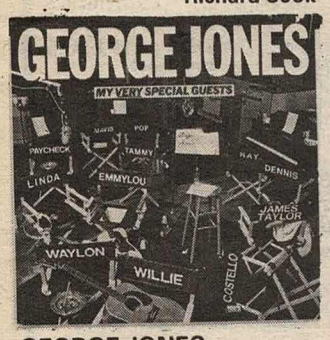


Joey Ramone by Jill Furmanovsky

undercut by humour; B-movie crescendos abruptly flop into slippery violin mazurkas while the bass rolls on. 'Subway Ride With Giuseppi Logan' is a strange locomotion, Bang and Emery trading rasping remarks while Lindberg does beat dictation.

The off-the-wall stuff is saved for 'Catharsis In Real Time'. Waves of fevered, reeling scales, Emery ripping through wildly articulate high register picking before some breakneck solo passages emerge to wrap things up. Good fun.

Richard Cook



GEORGE JONES
My Very Special Guests ***(Epic)***

A veteran of over 50 albums, second cousin to the Nashville addiction, cheap booze, paid dues and bad blues, George Jones continues his flirtations with legend and the bottle. He never has to up-date his image any to convince the converted, so you can just see the gals in Ernest Tubbs queueing to have themselves snapped next to his cardboard cut-out. Being predictable is the beauty of Jones' tight-lipped, macho crooning — even when he enlists the support of his 'very special guests', folks like James Taylor, Linda, Emmy Lou, Waylon, Willie and Elvis (Costello). Music Alley opens its doors and puts another dime in that juke box.

When you get to Tennessee Jones makes a lot of sense, him and his progeny stare down from the faces of a thousand pawn shops, his whisky-soaked life is a blueprint for the white trash looking for a soundtrack and it's a gravy train for the executives on the Avenues. You can depend on old George: if only I could sing a country song like him. A lot of dudes would give their payload to get next to some of this action.

So it's nice and soft and pleasant, but it isn't the sound of Tennessee that really matters — that prerogative remains the property of a bunch of wild-eyed fringe talents who only go into Trashville for the groceries: Barefoot Jerry, Mac Gayden and Dennis Linde, all capable of transcending the art form and, believe me, struggling to make the grade that Jones just sits on. The awards, the kudos, the pomp and rhinestone circumstance is where he's at. It's middleaged country — if you want swing and rock and music for the body and soul you won't get it here in large doses.

The cast list is a session man's convention: the stars are glittering. With Elvis Costello it's probably a dream come true, duetting alongside a master on 'Stranger In The House': goddamn, the Costello critter ain't so bad after all. Johnny Paycheck can't cut it though on J C Fogerty's 'Proud Mary' (dig out 'Blue Ridge Rangers' if you want to know why), and Emmy Lou is too restrained on Rodney Crowell's 'Here We Are' (plus Hot Band) to make the square dance.

Older chestnuts like 'Will The Circle Be Unbroken' have as much to do with where good country music is at as Dr Hook (and they're here too). The best of the bunch comes down to a reunion with Tammy via Billy Sherrill on 'It Sure Was Good', and this is funny peculiar. Willie Nelson's 'I Gotta Get Drunk' is funny ha-ha and Nelson plus Jody Paine equals the only decent picking on the disc. With Jennings, Taylor and Ronstadt you can be damn sure that Hank wouldn't *ever* have done it this way.

George Jones doesn't have to move many muscles to be him, instantly recogniseable, immediately forgettable. Sacrilege, say the old timers. If only a whole new audience could come to terms with gutsy country through this introduction. They won't. This one is easy listening but someday you're going to want your good old boys playing hard. Honestly, there's more to Tennessee than this. Listen to George and Elvis by all means but to imagine it ends there is akin to digging on the blues because you got the first Led Zeppelin album. Bartender! This bottle is empty.

Max Bell

SHOWADDYWADDY
Crepes & Drapes ***(Arista)***

THIS seductively titled opus is a collection of '50s and early '60s rock'n'roll standards (eg 'Sea Cruise', 'Twist & Shout', 'Sweet Little Rock'n'Roller') rubbing codas with an outbreak of nebulous Dairy Box jingles, each bearing eight songwriting credits (there are eight Waddies to the Sho, count 'em).

Sung with a due sense of melodrama by main hicupper Dave Bartram, studded with much perfunctory do-wopping, cluttered by an inept, plodding rhythm section, the whole bang-shoot is homogenised by generous vatfuls of derelict string and brass orchestration, and a standard of production that might have been sandpapered in Hell's hobby shop.

Leapfrogging as it is into the Top Thirty, 'Crepes & Drapes' becomes another symptom of the tyranny of mediocrity which the public at large is seemingly gormless enough to swallow.

Rick Joseph

IMPORTS

"THE tenor is a rhythm instrument and the best statements Negroes have made, of what their soul is, have been on tenor saxophone. The tenor's got that thing, that honk. You can get people with it. Sometimes you can be playing that tenor and, I'm telling you, the people want to jump across the rail."

The quote is by Ornette Coleman and heads Robert Palmer's informative sleeve notes to 'Honkers And Screamers', volume six in the exemplary 'Roots Of Rock' series of double-albums released by Arista-Savoy. Maybe Coleman was keeping things a little tight by merely tenor totin'. After all, Bird, Louis Jordan and a few other alto-men have chipped in their share of righteous riffs along the way. But in rooting for the sax he was dead on target as far as R&B is concerned, for it was juke-box jivers like Jordan, Earl Bostic, Eddie Vinson and Sam 'The Man' Taylor, plus big band wild men like Illinois Jacquet and Arnett Cobb, who made it so easy for Haley and Co. to set up shop a few years later.

The quintet of players featured on 'Honkers And Screamers' also played their part, these stompers including **Lee Allen**, the man from Kansas City who later chipped in those memorable solos on classic Fats Domino and Little Richard cuts; Paul Williams, whose 'Hucklebuck' spilled out from so many jukeboxes that even Sinatra got around to covering it; and **Big Jay McNeely**, one of the first tenorists to assume the flat-on-back position in an effort to add even more audience reaction to his happy honkin'.

It's sad to relate now that such men were once reviled by the music press, who hated Bostic's tone, Jordan's undeniable commercial appeal and Jacquet's search for the stratosphere. For many years these pioneers received nary a good review in print — even though the punters just screamed for more. And why the latter did just that is admirably illustrated by the cuts that comprise 'Honkers And Screamers' — though I doubt that even the most avid zoot-suit hero will have the stamina to take all 32 tracks at one sitting.

Sax men also make a major contribution to 'The Party Album', a German Interchord release which documents the happenings at **Alexis Korner's** 50th birthday party, recorded and televised at Pinewood Studios in April, '78. Yet another double, 'Party' finds Kid Katalyst fronting a fine little outfit (Colin Hodgkinson — bass, Zoot Money — piano, Stu Speer — drums) that for much of the proceedings is joined by an all-star horn squad (Dick Morrissey, Art Themen, John Surman, Dick Heckstall-Smith, Mel Collins, Mike Zwerin), while on the final jam session that fills side four, the proceedings are further enlivened by the arrival of Eric Clapton, Duffy Power, Paul Jones, Neil Ford and Chris Farlowe.

As might be expected at such a soiree, the music is of variable quality. The big band is hardly lacking in spirit though the teamwork leaves something to be desired, while the various soloists vary from insipid to inspiring. But Zoot Money, bless his neglected noddle, is marvellous throughout, providing gems of fills and quality up-front work. If you can stand further reprises of 'Hi-Heel Sneakers', 'Stormy Monday' and such-like, then 'The Party Album' is there to be enjoyed.

But what you get out of it depends on what you put in. Remember that.

Fred Dellar

1-9-8-0 Left My Art In Ol' Frisco

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Subterranean Modern ***(Ralph)***

GOSH! The third album from Ralph in a year! Things are looking up — and not only Residentially, for 'Subterranean Modern' sees the Cryptic Corporation casting its net in wider waters and landing at least one sizeable sting-ray, in the shape of Tuxedomoon.

To recap: 'Subterranean Modern' is a project which (as the title suggests) purports to represent the "new San Francisco underground" through the work of four Bay Area bands: Chrome, Tuxedomoon, MX-80 Sound and The Residents. Since the album was made, both Tuxedomoon and MX-80 Sound have joined The Residents in the Ralph stable, which I suppose makes 'Subterranean Modern' something of an altruistic A&R exercise. No matter...

As a kind of conceptual thread running through the album, each outfit offers their own reading of 'I Left My Heart In San Francisco'. For Chrome, this means a few seconds of scornful noise; for Tuxedomoon, a telephone conversation between a Welfare Department flak-catcher and someone trying to claim benefit (sound familiar?), backed by hobo-harmonica humming the tune; for MX-80 Sound, a cumbersome jazz-rock workout, and for The Residents... well, you either love The Residents or you hate the way they keep springing out of your pigeonholes, and this won't alter your attitude one iota.

After 'Eskimo', their four tracks here mark a return to relative normalcy, Residentially speaking. All feature those high-register "children's choir" vocals in some measure, to best effect on 'Dumbo, The Clown (Who Loved Christmas)'. Christmas is to The Residents what 'Dumbo' is this year's manifestation.

Their best offering is 'Is He Really Bringing Roses?', a cuckold's lament set to a heartstring-tugging guitar line reminiscent of Joy Division's 'Transmission' riff. 'Time's Up' features some tense guitar scribbling courtesy of Fred Frith, and contains the great line *"Listen; Servility causes cancer — can't you see?"*. How can you dislike them?

Chrome, pictured on the back cover wearing bowlers, white boiler-suits, wellies and waders, and generally exuding a heavy *Clockwork Orange* vibe visually and musically, contribute a peculiarly American tension. 'Anti-Fade' starts with disembodied voices and eerie whinings, then erupts into an aggressive up-tempo maelstrom; 'Meet You In The Subway' is more of the urban dance, slower but somehow more manic, with a gradual increase in unease: just what, one wonders, will be the outcome of this subterranean rendezvous...?

Good as their tracks are, there's something missing from this Chrome; the sharp, harsh edge of 'Alien Soundtracks' and 'Half Machine Lip Moves' is conspicuous by its absence, particularly as regards the drums, which are solid, staple and functional, but lacking their usual crazed dynamism. On their first outing in a fully-equipped studio, Chrome have come up with a curiously smooth holocaust. Strange.

For Tuxedomoon, smoothness is an integral part of the overall design, a booster rather than a dampener. Both 'Everything You Want' and 'Waterfront Seat' have a slinky sinuosity which gives them all the appeal and accessibility of, say, Gary Numan, despite their massive superiority in terms of complexity and sheer inventive imagination.

Working on a ground of hazy guitar and/or synthesister drone-cycles, Tuxedomoon build what can best be described as textural sculptures. 'Waterfront Seat' is a soaring ski-slide haunted by interweaving mirages of soprano sax and trumpet sax (something like a coarser version of Terry Riley's 'Poppy Nogood And The Phantom Band'), whilst 'Everything You Want' uses its hypnotic sway to hint at mounting paranoia and unrest. Both pieces are emotionally formidable — not for nothing is their publishing company called *Angst Music* — and as musically engrossing as anything produced this year. Maybe Ralph could reissue their earlier stuff? Huh?

MX-80 Sound. I'm afraid, are the fly in the ointment. 'Lady In Pain' is redundant HM jazz-rock riffing with the sluggish portent of Cream and the technical braggadacio of early Mahavishnu Orchestra — quite unlistenable, in fact — and although 'Possessed' is somewhat more contemplative, it's still the product of a band besotted with backward glances rather than tentative peeps into tomorrow, and consequently hopelessly out of place on 'Subterranean Modern'.

So, you want jam on it, or something? Listen — three-quarters of an album of good music's a damn sight better than an entire album of mediocrity, and 'Subterranean Modern' is quite simply light-years ahead of any comparable compilation released this year.

Andy Gill

Chrome's Damo Suzuki

NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

Thursday

Birmingham Mercat Cross: **the Clinic.**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Orphan.**
Bournemouth Pinecliff Hotel: **Toulouse**
Bristol Crockers: **'A' Block**
Burntwood Troubadour: **The Amazing Dark Horse**
Chorley Joiners Arms: **Neon Tetra**
High Wycombe Nags Head: **Alan Clayson & The Argonauts**
Leeds Fan Club: **The Already Bored With The Eighties Gig featuring The Void / Prisoner / I'm So Hollow / Dance Chapter etc**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Red Beans & Rice**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Embryo / The Voyeurs**
London Clapham 101 Club: **Breakfast / Outsider**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **The Valentines**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Skindeep**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Lonesome No More**
London Kensington The Cricketers: **Lacey's Allstars**
London Kensington De Villiers Bar: **Gold Dust Twins**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Paul Jones & The Blues Band / Charlie Fawn**
London Mayfair Theatre: **Alberto y Lost Trios Paranoias in "Never Mind The Bullocks" (currently until February 2)**
London Shepherds Bush Trafalgar: **Speedball**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Al Cohn / Eddie Thompson Trio (for three days)**
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: **Flying Saucers**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **The O.K. Band**
London Waterloo Royal Victoria: **Freddy's Feetwarmers**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Spizz Energi**
London W.C 1. New Merlin's Cave: **Big Chief**
Macclesfield Krumbles: **The Shattered Dolls**
Maidstone Royal Albion: **Mick Muff & The Divers**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Drug Squad**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gaffa**
Nottingham West Bridgeford Dancing Slipper: **Art Failure**
Sheffield Limit Club: **The Beat**

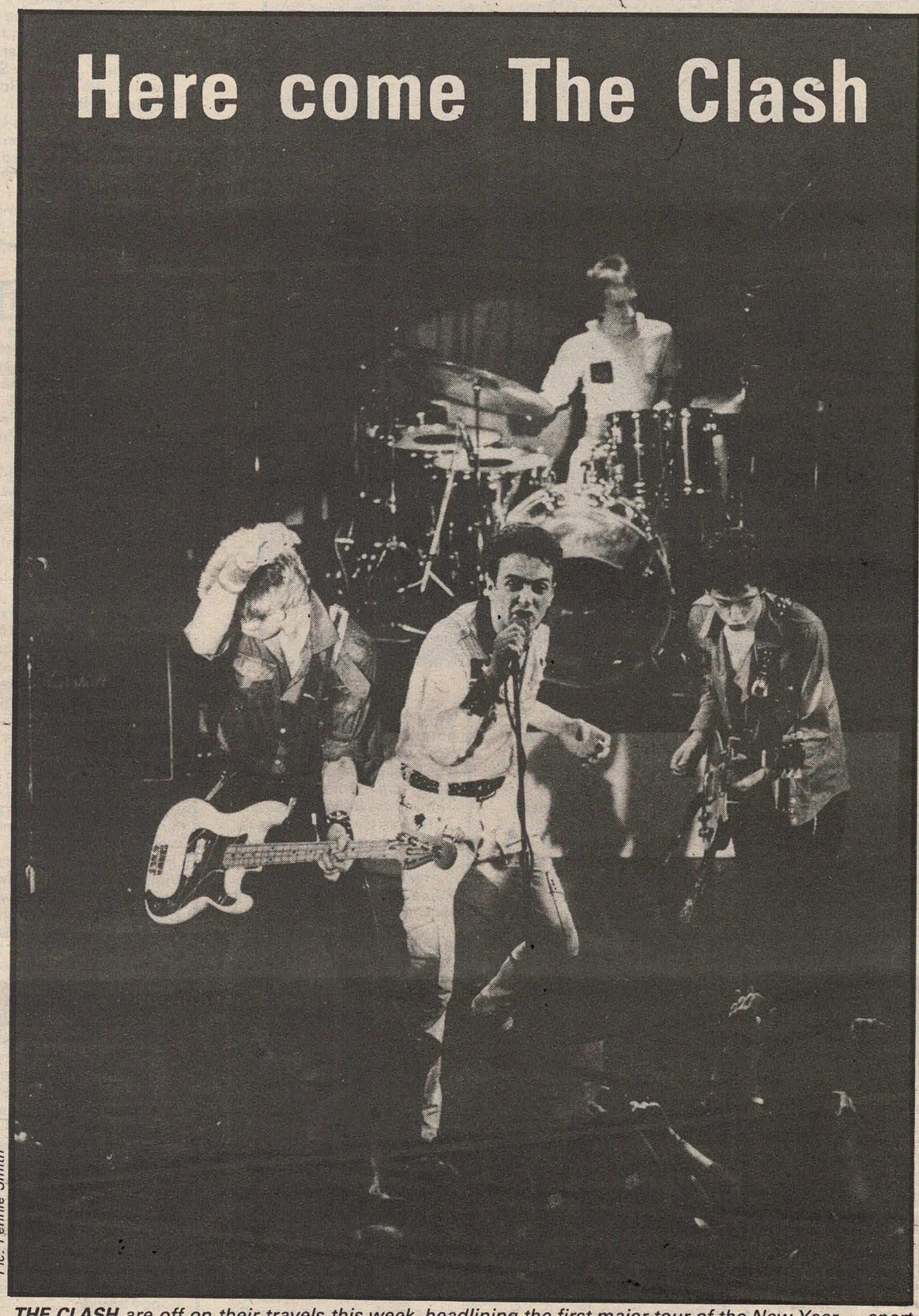
Friday

Barkingside Old Maypole: **Rusty 'n' The Renegades**
Bicester NCO Club: **Excel**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Bright Eyes**
Birmingham Elizabethan Days: **The Traitors**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **No Faith**
Birmingham The Underworld: **Protex**
Brentwood Hermit Club: **Bastille**
Brighton Lewes Rd. Inn: **Gina 'n'The Rockin' Rebels**
Bristol Crockers: **'A' Block**
Bristol Hope Chapel: **The X-Certs**
Bristol Trinity Church: **Flying Saucers**
Cambridge Corn Exchange: **Hi-Tension / The Shakes**
Coventry Ryton Bridge: **Streetlite**
Doncaster Thurnscoe Hotel: **The Classics**
Goole Station Hotel: **Side Effect**
Gosport Ferry Gardens: **Ductile Green Vegetables / Saxon Witchunt**
London Acton Kings Head: **Paz**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Marmalade / The Shapes**
London Camden Southampton Arms: **Jellyroll Blues Band**
London Chiswick John Bull: **Zorro**
London Clapham Two Brewers: **9 Below Zero**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Red Beans & Rice**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Long Tall Shorty**
London Holborn Princess Louise: **The Scoop**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Soft Boys**
London Kensington The Cricketers: **Manyana**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Chelsea**
London New Cross Royal Albert: **Rubber Johnny**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Greig & Nigel's Folk and Blues Night**
London Putney White Lion: **Hot Points**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **The Crooks**
London WC.1 New Merlin's Cave: **Esmond Selwyn's Jazz Fabrique**
Lowestoft Cleopatra's: **J.A.L.N. Band**
Nelson James Nelson's Ballroom: **Vital Colours / Esoterics / The Reluctants**
New Brighton Empress Club: **Crafty Avenue**
Newcastle City Hall: **Blondie**
Reading Target Club: **The Moonwalkers**
Retford Porterhouse: **The Beat**
Salisbury Rising Sun: **Program**
Scarborough Penthouse: **The Alwoody Jets / Bombers UK**
Sheffield Broadfield Hotel: **The Shattered Dolls**
Southand Barons Club: **Matchbox**
Truro Punchbowl & Ladle: **Metro Glider**

Saturday

Ascott-under-Wychwood Tiddy Hall: **The Summerville Gentlemans Band**
Aylesbury Friars: **The Clash**
Birmingham Bogarts: **Skydiver**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Strider**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **School Sports**
Bodmin Jail Club: **Metro Glider**
Bournemouth Pinecliff Hotel: **The Martian Schoolgirls**

Here come The Clash



Pic: Pennie Smith

THE CLASH *are off on their travels this week, headlining the first major tour of the New Year — apart from Blondie who, of course, have been on the road since the latter part of the Old Year. The sparks start to fly at Aylesbury (Saturday), Canterbury (Sunday) and Brighton (Tuesday and Wednesday). The close-up below shows the band's* ***JOE STRUMMER*** *in action last month in New York.*

Bracknell Bridge House: **El Seven**
Bristol Granary: **Quartz**
Chiddingly Six Bells: **Scissor Fits**
Dudley J.B.'s Club: **Protex**
Leeds Peacock Hotel: **The Alwoodley Jets / Bombers UK**
Leicester Centre Hotel: **Middle Earth**
Llanelli Glen Ballroom: **Matchbox**
London Camden Brecknock: **Tennis Shoes**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Billy Karloff Band / The Roaring 80's**
London Chiswick John Bull: **The Flatbackers**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **The Roaring 80's**
London Hammersmith Lyric Theatre (lunchtime, free): **Bob Kerr's Jazz Friends**
London Hammersmith Riverside Studios: **Paul Jones & The Blues Band**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Bad Manners**
London Kensington The Nashville: **The Piranhas**
London Southall Hamborough Tavern: **First Aid**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Big Chief**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **The Chefs / Ijax All Stars**
Luton Kingsway Tavern: **Yakety Yak**
Middlesbrough Rock Garden: **The Beat**
Newcastle City Hall: **Blondie**
Nottingham Boat Club: **Mistress**
Salford Methodist Hall: **Pieces Of Glass**
St Austell New Cornish Riviera: **Hi-Tension**
Stockton The Teessider: **Carl Green & The Scene**
Wishaw Crown Hotel (lunchtime): **The Pests**
York Tang Hall: **The Classics**

Sunday

Basildon Double Six: **The Steve Hooker Band**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Prima Donna**
Birmingham Shirley Red Lion: **The Crack**

Birmingham (Yardley) The Swan: **Video**
Bradford College Vaults Bar: **Japanese Soldiers**
Brighton Buceaneer: **The Gifted Children**
Bromley The Northover (lunchtime): **Bill Scott & Ian Ellis**
Burnley Bank Hall Club: **Side Effect**
Burnley Concorde Club: **The Shapes**
Canterbury Odeon: **The Clash**
Deeside Leisure Centre (near Chester): **Blondie**
Grimsby The Valiant: **The Classics**
Leeds Royal Park Hotel: **Windows**
London Battersea Nags Head: **Jugular Vein**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Misty**
London Charing Cross Duke of Buckingham: **The Invisibles (for four days)**
London Finchley Torrington: **Morrissey-Mullen Band**
London Fulham Greyhound: **The Jump**
London Hammersmith Riverside Studios: **Stan Tracey/Michael Horovitz**
London Herne Hill Half Moon: **9 Below Zero**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Rubber Johnny**
London Kensington The Cricketers: **The O.K. Band**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Dolly Mixture**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Jay McShann Trio (also Tuesday and Wednesday)**
Maidenhead Alexandra's: **Mark Andrews Band**
Maidstone Royal Albion (lunchtime): **Prodigal Son**
Newbridge Memorial Hall: **Mistress**
Newquay Central Hotel: **The Winners**
Norwich Whites: **The Running Dogs**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Medium Medium**
Nottingham Playhouse: **Roaring Jelly**
Preston Moonraker: **J.G. Spoils Rock Band**
Redhill Lakers Hotel: **The Rackets**
Sheffield Birdcage: **The Uncool Dance Band**
Walsall Dirty Duck (lunchtime): **The Amazing Dark Horse**

Monday

Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Freebird**
Birmingham Odeon: **Blondie**
Boston Folk Club: **Celebrated Ratliffe Stout Band**
Ilford Cauliflower Hotel: **Original East Side Stompers**
Leeds Fforde Green Hotel: **Gina 'n' The Rockin' Rebels**
London Bermondsey Apples & Pears: **Stan's Blues Band**
London Canning Town Bridgehouse: **Long Tall Shorty**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Splodgenessabounds**
London Fulham Greyhound: **The Carpettes**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Vipers**
London Kensington Imperial College: **Roaring Jelly**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Red Beans & Rice / Geraint Watkins**
London Knightsbridge Pizzao On The Park: **Jay McShann / Stone Savage Duo**
London Marquee Club: **Roy Sundholm Band**
London N.4 The Stapleton: **The O.K. Band**
London Putney Half Moon: **Noel Murphy**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Penny Royal**
London Ronnie Scott's Club: **Junior Cook / Bill Hardman Quintet (for two weeks)**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Party**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gwaihir**
Southend Zero 6: **Musicians Workshop**

Tuesday

Birmingham Fighting Cocks: **Brujo**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Killer**
Birmingham Odeon: **Blondie**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Speed Limit**
Brighton Top Rank: **The Clash**
Chester Labour Club: **The Final Programme**
Glasgow Countdown Bar: **Dreamboys**
Gravesend Red Lion: **The Rackets**
London Camden Brecknock: **First Aid**
London Canning Town Bridgehouse: **The Carpettes**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **The Valentines**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Clayson & The Argonauts / Pete Cox**
London Hammersmith Riverside Studios: **Smilin' Pete Hogman**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Nik Turner's Inner City Unit**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Samson**
London N.4 The Stapleton: **Brett Marvin & The Thunderbolts**
London Old Kent Rd. Thomas A'Beckett: **Stan's Blues Band**
London W.1 Maunkberry's: **Paul Goodman**
Norwich Cromwells: **Regatta**
Sheffield Blitz: **Stunt Kites / Repulsive Alien**
Sheffield Limit Club: **The Act**
Walsall Dirty Duck: **The Amazing Dark Horse**

Wednesday

Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Brujo**
Birmingham Bogarts: **Quartz**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Rainmaker**
Birmingham (Yardley) Bulls Head: **Roses**
Bournemouth Wallisdown College: **Program**
Bradford College Vaults Bar: **Hustler St. Band**
Brighton Top Rank: **The Clash**
Bristol The Stonehouse: **Headlines**
Cheltenham Plough Inn: **Roadsters**
Liverpool The Masonic: **The Zorkie Twins**
London Camden Brecknock: **The Act**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **The Stickers**
London Hammersmith Riverside Studios: **Graham Humphries Band**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Lambrettas**
London Knightsbridge The Grove: **Free Beer**
London Marquee Club: **The Boys**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Dana Simmonds & Greig's Folk and Blues Showcase**
London Twickenham Celery Market: **Scissor Fits**
London Victoria The Venue: **Annette Peacock**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **The Risk (formerly Security Risk)**
London Wimbledon F.C. Nelson's Club: **The Dance Band**
London W.1 Maunkberry's: **Paul Goodman**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Gwaihir**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Some Chicken**
Oldham Romeo & Juliet: **Crafty Avenue**
Reading Target Club: **The Exclusives**
Solihull Golden Lion: **The Clinic**
South Woodford Railway Bell: **Original East Side Stompers**
Swinton Duke of Wellington: **The Trend**

NEW YORK GIG GUIDE

Compiled by Joe Stevens

MONDAY (7): Pass — **Ear Food;** Sweet Basil — **Harold Vick;** Heaven — **Pegasus (four days); Lone Star — NRBQ:** Trafalgar — **Betrayal.**
TUESDAY (8): Ones — **Sugar Minnott;** Hurrah — **Klaus Nomi;** Kenny's Castaways — **Jack Hardy;** Sweet Basil - **Muhal Richard Abrams (four days).**
WEDNESDAY (9): Hurrah — **Human Switchboard/Pylon;** Max's Kansas City — **The Dead Boys/Luigi & The Wise Guys** (two days).
THURSDAY (10): My Father's Place — **David Johansen;** J.P.'s — **Diane Ponzio.**
FRIDAY (11): Resorts International — **Ella Fitzgerald;** Bottom Line — **Betty Carter** (three days); Maxwell's — **The Normals;** Stars — **The Troggs;** Max's Kansas City — **The Billies/The Flirt.**
SATURDAY (12): TR3 — **The Shah Slept Here/ZZZ:** Alice Tully Hall — **Kenneth Cooper; Max's Kansas City — The Stimulators.**
SUNDAY (13): Nassau Coliseum — Aerosmith; Avery Fisher — **Aur Hitler;** Slugger Ann's — **Bowie's Revenge;** Sweet Basil — **Chuck Wayne** (two days); Kenny's Castaways — **Positive Force.**

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PLUS SUPPORT + IAN FLEMING

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THE BISHOPS
PLUS FRIENDS + IAN FLEMING

Sat 5th Jan — Adm £1.00
THE QUADS
PLUS HEARTBEATS + IAN FLEMING

Sun 6th Jan — Adm £1.00
DEXYS MIDNIGHT RUNNERS
PLUS SUPPORT + MANDY H

Mon 7th Jan — Adm £1.00
ROY SUNDHOLM
PLUS SUPPORT + JERRY FLOYD

Tue 8th Jan — Adm £1.25
THE FLYS
PLUS GUESTS + JERRY FLOYD

Wed 9th Jan — Adm £1.50
THE BOYS
PLUS FRIENDS + JERRY FLOYD

Thur 10th Jan — Adm £1.00
CHARLIE DORE
PLUS FRIENDS + IAN FLEMING

HAMBURGERS AND OTHER HOT AND COLD SNACKS AVAILABLE

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23 BARKING ROAD, CANNING TOWN, E16

Thursday January 3rd — 50p
EMBRYO
+ Voyeurs

Friday January 4th — 60p
Q-TIPS (Streetband)
+ The Agents

Saturday January 5th — 70p
JACKIE LYNTON BAND

Sunday January 6th — 50p
SPECIAL BRANCH
+ Spider

Monday January 7th — 50p
LONG TALL SHORTY
+ BODY SNATCHERS
(Eddie Steady Go)

Tuesday January 8th — 50p
CARPETTES
+ The Dials

Wednesday January 9th — 50p
WASTED YOUTH
(release date of debut single Jealousey)

Thursday January 10th — 60p
★ **ROLL UPS** ★
Album out now Low Dives for Highballs

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3 Thursday — 75p
LONESOME NO MORE

4 Friday — £1
THE SOFT BOYS

5 Saturday — £1
BAD MANNERS

6 Sunday — 75p
RUBBER JOHNNY

7 Monday — 75p
THE VIPERS

8 Tuesday — £1
NIK TURNER'S INNER CITY UNIT

9 Wednesday — £1
THE LAMBRETTAS

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Wednesday January 2nd — Free adm. with this ad.
CLASSIX NOUVEAU + Support

Thursday January 3rd — £1.70
SASSAFRAS + One Hand Clapping

Friday January 4th — £2.20
SUPERCHARGE + Teaser

Saturday January 5th — £2.20
JUDGE DREAD + Jive Schemes

Monday January 7th — £1.20
U B 40 + Circles

Tuesday January 8th — £1.20
DEBONAIRES (Ex Little Acre)

Wednesday January 9th — £1.20
Heavy Metal Night featuring
PRAYING MANTIS + Xero
+ D. J. Neil Kay

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8pm-2am MONDAY TO SATURDAY
OVER 18s ONLY

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Friday January 11th
THE GREYHOUND, PARK LANE, CROYDON, SURREY
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Saturday January 12th
UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX, WIVENHOE, COLCHESTER, ESSEX

Friday January 18th
TOWN HALL, CHATHAM, KENT

Saturday January 19th
CORN EXCHANGE, BEDFORD, BEDFORDSHIRE

Thursday January 24th
LEA'S CLIFF HALL, SEA FRONT, FOLKESTONE, KENT

Doors open 8pm. DJs include Robb Eden, Brian Martin, Robbie Day. Admission to all Caroline Roadshow is a mere £2
Bookings 0621 783 229

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WEST KENSINGTON TUBE (603 6071)

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Thursday, 3rd Jan. — £1.00
R'n'B Night with THE BLUES BAND + Charlie Fawn

Friday, 4th Jan. — £1.50
CHELSEA + Support

Saturday, 5th Jan. — £1.50
THE PIRANHAS + Support

Sunday, 6th Jan. — £1.00
DOLLY MIXTURE + Support

Monday, 7th Jan. — £1.00
RED BEANS & RICE + Geraint Watkins

Tuesday, 8th Jan. — £1.00
Heavy Metal Night with SAMSON + Support

NO ADMISSION FOR UNDER 20's

THE PORTERHOUSE

20 Carolgate, Retford, Notts.
Tel. 0777 704981.

Saturday January 5th — Adm £1.50
THE BEAT

Sunday January 6th — Adm £1.50
BETHNAL

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100 Oxford Street, London West One

Thursday January 3rd
A Special Presentation from Jamaica
THE CHANTELLS
with **Natrus**
plus supporting programme
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Tel. 01-946 5211
Sunday 20th January 1980
By courtesy of Beggars Banquet

MERTON PARKAS

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A benefit concert in aid of Little League Football.

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Tues 29th–Weds 30th Jan — £3.50
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Thurs 31st Jan — £3.00
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Featuring the Blues Band, Stonebridge McGuinness and the Dance Band

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ASWAD

Sat 2nd Feb — £3.25
KOKOMO

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THU 3rd. TRICKY & THE PREFECTS

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DIVIDING LINE
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THE BECOYS
TUE. 8th JAN. £1.50. + SUPPORT.

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WED 9th JAN. £1.50. "...are about boyfriends, kissing, pink + cleaning your teeth" said N.M.E.

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Thursday, January 3rd — LAMMAGYRE

Friday, January 4th — TOTAL STRANGERS

Saturday, January 5th — SPIDER

Sunday, January 6th — LOOSE TALK

Tuesday, January 8th — NUTHIN' FANCY

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Extra Show Saturday 2nd February

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LIVE PAGE

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Friday January 4th 50p — THE LONG TALL & SHORT + Ideal Square
Saturday January 5th 50p — DOGWATCH
Sunday January 6th £1 — MODS + Jump
Monday January 7th 50p — CARPETTES + Cover Girls
Tuesday January 8th 50p — HOLIDAYS
Wednesday January 9th 50p — TURBO + The Fool

FRIARS AT THE MAXWELL HALL AYLESBURY
Saturday January 5th, 7.30pm
The Nineteen Eighties Start Here
THE CLASH
COMPLETELY SOLD OUT
Unfortunately no tickets will be available at door on night
Just for the record the Clash were voted the best friars band of all time in last year's friars poll and this gig was the fastest selling friars gig of all time
Ice Age Optimism

THE MOONLIGHT CLUB
100 West End Lane, West Hampstead, N.W.6.
Thursday January 3rd £1 — SPIZZ ENERGI + Soul Boys
Friday January 4th £1.50 — THE CROOKS + Bass Manners + Limo's
Saturday January 5th £1 — THE I JAX ALL STARS + The Chefs (Vaultage Tour)
Monday January 7th £1 — CRASS + Poison Girls
Tuesday January 8th £1 — FATAL MICROBES + Dangerous Girls
Wednesday January 9th £1 — THE RISK (formerly Security Risk) + Medium Medium

To Advertise Ring

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Bop Street Kids
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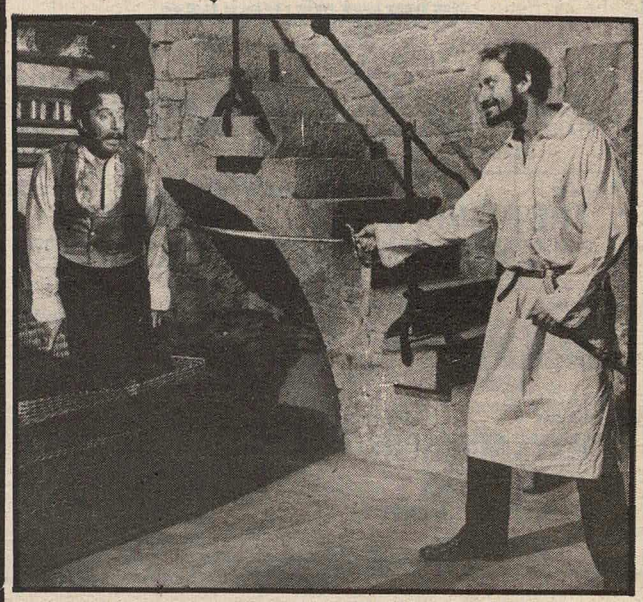
Silver Screen



Sellers in a basket, a speciality of ***The Prisoner Of Zenda.***

Return to Zenda

The Prisoner Of Zenda

Directed by Richard Quine Starring Peter Sellers, Lynne Frederick, Lionel Jeffries and Elke Summer

THIS comedy revival of *The Prisoner Of Zenda* provokes indulgent smiles rather than helpless laughter. For all that, Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais have avoided the usual telly writer's pitfall of lapsing into a string of loosely linked jokes and come up with a cohesive variant on the old yarn.

Those who know Peter Sellers mainly from *Oh No Not The Pink Panther Part 17* and the latest exclusive on his wife of the moment will get some idea from *Zenda* of the comic skills that made his reputation. After a brief cameo as the octogenarian King Rudolph Of Ruritania, whose ludicrous death triggers the plot, Sellers plays young Rudolph, the weak, lisping heir and also his double, Syd Frewin, the heart-of-oak Bethnal Green cabbie.

Syd is roped in, at first unwittingly, as a decoy to draw off assassins in the pay of Rudolph's sinister half-brother Michael (Jeremy Kemp), next in line to the throne. Despite the occasional made-in-Britain one-liner — told that the King has trouble with his R's, Frewin puts it down to sitting in the wet grass — the resulting ramifications unwind with neatly understated ludicrousness.

Clearly stamped 'For All The Family', *Zenda* accordingly features a couple of recurring pantomime motifs. The fatuous Count de Montparnasse (Gregory Sierra) is perpetually seeking revenge on Rudoplh/Syd after the former's daliance with his wife (Elke Sommer), while Rupert of Hentzau (Stuart Wilson) is not so much a character as a swashbuckling laugh. Finally Syd asks him: "Have you any idea how that laugh of yours gets on people's nerves?"

Tempting fate with a generous slice of wish-fulfulment, Sellers weds the lovely Princess Flavia (Lynne Frederick) and prepares to live happily ever after. Even if you neither remember nor care how they finished up in real life, you'd have to be Scrooge not to get something from this affectionate romp.

Harry George

My Way Home

(The Bill Douglas Trilogy) Directed by Bill Douglas Starring Stephen Archibald *(BFI)*

JAMIE and Tommy are two brothers growing up in a Scottish mining village in the 1940s. Their mother is in an asylum, their respective fathers too cowardly to own them; so they live a life of chronic poverty, 'cared' for by their senile grandmother.

When she dies, the boys are taken into care; but Jamie escapes and hides with his father, where he's treated with bitter and devious cruelty by his new grandma. His father marries, leaving him in care; then reclaims him later with disastrous results.

Jamie returns to the home of his own accord; is adopted; runs away. Eventually he joins the RAF and develops a tentative friendship with a fellow serviceman in Suez.

A bare outline of plot does scant justice to Bill Douglas' autobiographical trilogy which has been widely, and deservedly, acclaimed as a masterpiece of contemporary British cinema. Shot in black and white, these slow, austere, almost silent films perfectly mesh the qualities of memory and realism with haunting visual images.

The poverty and emotional deprivation which the film details is appalling to contemplate; yet is presented with the utmost rigour and a total lack of sentimentality — a discipline on Douglas' part which is itself both harrowing and extremely moving. The film deals almost exclusively with the ignorant, and inarticulate; yet brilliantly conveys the complexity, the pain, of people. Neither does it shirk from showing the damage that people can do to each other when they are locked, by poverty and misery, into themselves. Their cruelty is precisely contextualised and the viewer's response is neither hatred nor condemnation as much as sorrow and a righteous anger that anyone should have to live in such materially and emotionally bereft conditions.

That Bill Douglas should himself have suffered a similar upbringing, and transformed the experience into a film of such power and compassion is little short of miraculous.

Graham Lock

On The Box

Saturday January 5

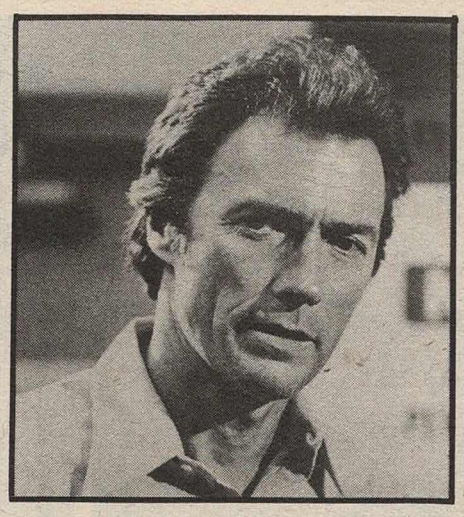
STAY AWAY JOE: Offensive slapstick—an Indian rodeo rider's attempts to bring prosperity to his family and tribe always end in disaster — posing as an Elvis Presley 'musical comedy'. Besides reinforcing stereotypes (El never was renowned for his liberal attitudes), the flick just ain't funny. Peter Tewksbury directed, slackly, in 1968 and the cast features another famous stiff in Joan Blondell. **(BBC 2).**

Sunday January 6

FIDDLER ON THE ROOF: More stereotypes — three hours' worth — in Norman Jewison's staid adaptation of the big Broadway musical, with Topol hamming it up as the Jewish milkman in a post-revolutionary Ukranian village striving to marry off his five daughters. Isaac Stern is the fiddler on the soundtrack. **(BBC 1).**

Monday January 7

THUNDERBOLT AND LIGHTFOOT: Michael Cimino, writer of *Magnum Force* and maker of *The Deer Hunter,* made his 1974 directorial debut with this generally under-regarded Eastwood caper. Big Clint's teamed with Jeff Bridges as they squabble with George Kennedy and Geoffrey Lewis over a hefty heist. Solid performances all round, then, and some neat offbeat touches amidst the spectacular violence. Ruthlessly efficient and a good example of the '70s mainstream American melodrama. **(BBC 1).**



Big Clint (left) heralds the start of a Beeb season of Eastwood actioners. First up is Thunderbolt And Lightfoot. Coming soon: Dirty Harry, Coogan's Bluff and Joe Kidd.

Tuesday January 8

ROSELAND: Gentle trilogy of vignettes from James Ivory set in New York's venerable Roseland ballroom, all very bittersweet and twee, and in true with nothing much at all. Made in 1977, so it didn't exactly bust the box-office. Still, if you care to see Geraldine Chaplin and Christopher Walken dancing the night away . . . **(BBC 2).**

Wednesday January 9

WEST SIDE STORY: Part of the Beeb's ponderous 'Set To Music' season, *West Side Story* will look pretty funny nineteen years on. The coy re-working of the Romeo and Juliet theme in a New York ghetto beset by warring spics and wasps was hailed as a musical masterpiece at the time and festooned with Oscars. Now, Natalie Wood, Richard Beymer, George Chakiris, Rita Moreno, Russ Tamblyn and the rest seem insufferably wet and would be easy prey for the feeblest gang of 12-year-old muggers. But some of the music (Leonard Bernstein) is memorable if the lyrics (Stephen Sondheim) are not, and the choreography (Jerome Robbins) has a certain gauche vitality if the direction (Robert Wise) does not. Even so, *The Warriors* will look sillier sooner. **(BBC 2).**

Monty Smith

DICKIES

From page 15

records and getting bankrolled around Europe?

Leonard again: "We started suspecting it at one point. When record companies were coming out to see us we kind of got suspicious and thought 'Hey! Maybe we can actually *get away* with all this!' "

It was right around then that John Hewlett saw them. One-time manager of McGuinness/Flint, Gallagher & Lyle and Sparks, Hewlett was as profoundly sick of the slothful state of the music biz as The Dickies. He saw them in L.A., cut them a demo, flew straight back to England and — after a couple of refusals — played the tapes to A&M's Derek Green. Green asked him how much he wanted, Hewlett said 100,000 dollars and Green said, "It's yours". Simple as that.

Since the moment they landed a Top Twenty chart hit with the ridiculous 'Banana Split Song', it seems like A&M have been loath to release anything but cover versions. This rates their chances of credibility as slim or none.

"There's not much we can do about it" Leonard explains. "We're so apathetic — artistically and business-wise. We tend to let things take their course, and if they run amok then it's not our fault, and if it goes good them we're behind it all the way."

How much do they attribute the 50,000 sale of 'The Incredible Shrinking Dickies' to the fact that it cost under three quid?

Stan: "You still can't make a kid throw his pounds out on the table, y'know. No one's gonna buy something if they don't want to. We just gave them a break. That's why I reckon the record company's pretty cool . . . to let us do something like that."

Leonard chips in: "But boy, when the next album comes out, you'd better look out. It's gonna cost an arm and a leg."

JUST IN CASE this hasn't sunk home yet, The Dickies aren't FOR REAL. They're a spoof, a heist, a bonafide rock'n'roll swindle. They couldn't be further removed from being 'punks' if they tried. They don't actually know what a 'punk' is, and they care even less.

Mind you, they do say that inside every spoof-rock band there's a serious artists struggling for recognition.

"Yeah," says Leonard. "Inevitably that applies to us. I remember we were doing 'Curb Job' once, and Chuck was doing this little piano solo thing, and I walked up with my plastic stick and started hitting the keys, and afterwards he got really angry about it . . . 'That was my big solo!' So I think every one of us has a twisted sense of pride about it.

"It gets frustrating," he adds, "if you get brought up to think that if you make a mistake then you've blown something, and then you start making mistakes and you're suddenly making a living out of it. You start questioning your sense of self-worth!

"Also, now it seems we have to think commercially and stuff, y'know. We have to try to be *The Dickies,* and revive The Dickies, or revitalise The Dickies, or whatever."

MEANWHILE, back in the dressing-room, Leonard Graves Philips is slumped on a stool in the corner. He's surveying this strange scene they've created, this room full of crazy little kids, this Dickiemania. It's bananas.

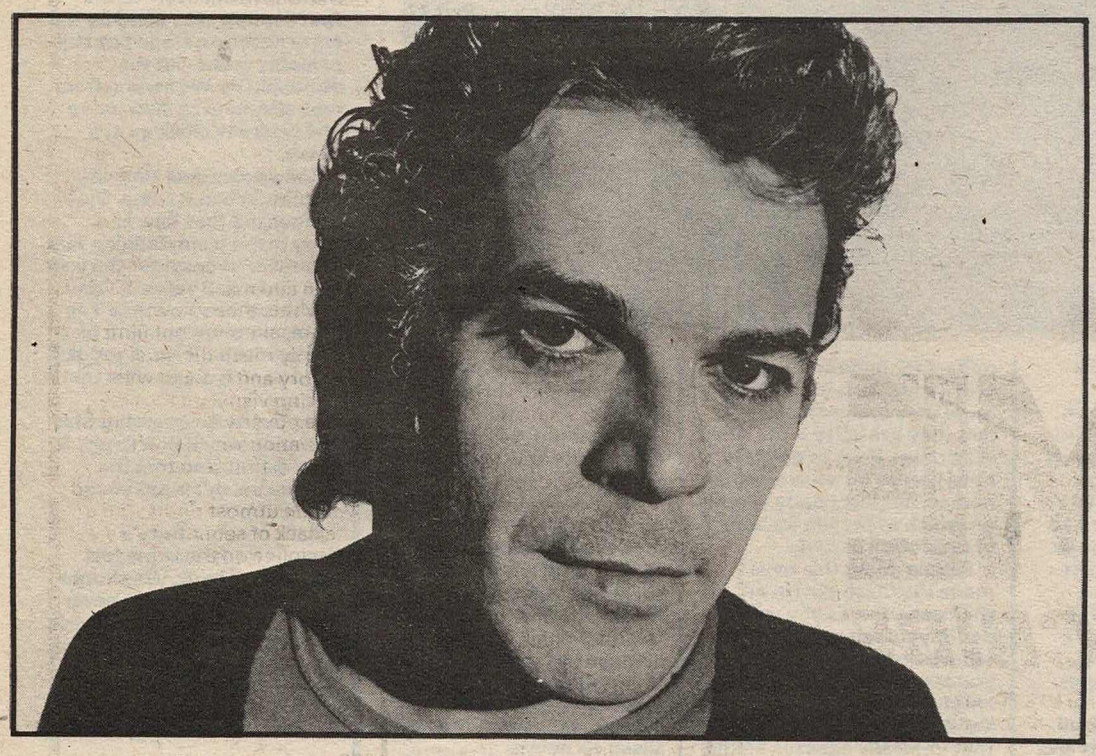
"We probably admire The Banana Splits most out of any of the bands that we've covered. We can identify with them," he smiles. "They're childish and they're passe."

I wonder if he ever imagined he'd be the punk idol of the pre-pubertal?

"I was really surprised. I can see it, though. It makes sense to me that our audiences are really young kids, but I didn't figure out when we started that that's how it was gonna be.

"In four months time," he adds, sounding all philosophical, "we'll probably be playing to expectant mothers. That's my ultimate goal."

Meet The Music Makers



IAN DURY

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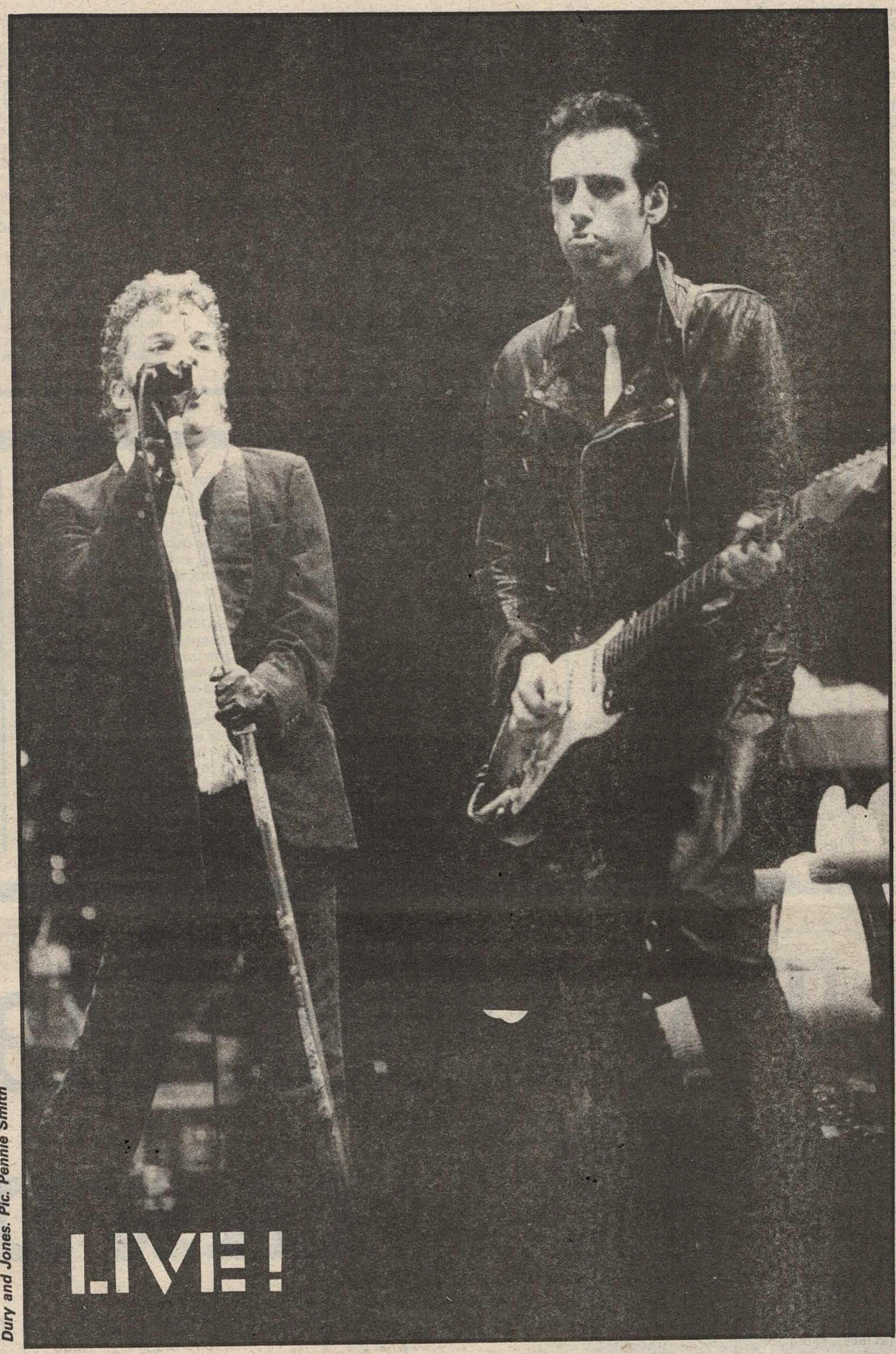


Dury and Jones. Pic. Pennie Smith

Queen

FOR A fiver a throw, you too could have caught Queen on the last night of their UK tour and more importantly, appeased your conscience (most sensitive around glutinous Xmas time) concerning the starved, crisis-ridden people of Kampuchea.

If my equations are right, this gig alone — the first in a sold-out series of four dedicated to Kampuchea — should raise a healthy 20 grand. Who knows, Queen may be feeding the 10,000 with their loaf of royal bran after all.

But apart from the Unicef posters and Brian May briefly mentioning the cause, this was just another Queen techno-flash dry-iced affair. The new leather-boy image and the opening 'Jail House Rock' can't betray the old bombastic 'Bohemian Rhapsody' Queen we all know and disagree about. Mercury still treats each precious song like a magnum opus and the audience like a cast of extras in the Cecil B. de Mille production of the *Ten Commandments*. (No prizes for guessing Mercury's role).

Lucky Freddie, no closet concert pianist, ballerina or diva like the rest of us, gets to parade his fantasies on stage: the all-purpose prima donna in leather jeans. He played as much to the cameras as anywhere else since the benefits are being filmed to raise yet more urgently needed cash.

Audience reaction was thoroughly and predictably Pavlovian: dry ice, bright lights, cue; everybody banner-waving and singing along as Queen drop-kick another hit into the collective net of recognition. Too bad that the rumoured Boomtown Rats didn't materialise to disrupt the po-faced grandeur of it all.

So, I don't admire Queen's music but their gesture was unerringly sound (though it can't be any big deal for a mega-band to donate one night's earnings). Altogether, it's a very long way from the Hammy Odeon to Kampuchea, but help is on the way.

Elissa Van Poznak

Ian Dury & The Blockheads
The Clash
Matumbi

IT COULD only be cold comfort to them, but this isn't the first time rock'n'roll has played a distant part in the lives of the people of Cambodia, as it was called then. Let's hope it's the last time it has to close ranks against such madness.

In the summer new crops will be harvested. Till then a 1,000 tons of food and supplies will be airlifted into Kampuchea each day. *A 1000 tons a day.* If you pause to think of the scale of that operation and then add up the proceeds of four nights of top British rock attractions, the perspective is alarming. They're four nights that will probably only begin to pay for four days.

The second night promised Matumbi, Ian Dury and a mystery guest . . . fresh from playing the Acklam Hall over Christmas and making the third dry-run for their imminent tour — The Clash!

Dury's audience are a rum lot. A surprise appearance by The Clash would send the average crowd of new age rock fans into raptures, or so you'd think. But Dury's *truly* iconoclastic music — albeit dressed as vaudeville — seems to draw people who might only go to two gigs a year and only then if they were both Blockheads' gigs.

They are less into the traditional fury of The Clash and more keen to bounce and sway to Matumbi and fall about when the chief Blockhead hits them with his slapstick or lets drop a bit of fruity verbiage.

The Clash threw hungry, slack-jowled 'street' shapes all over the stage and tried to roar but couldn't steal the headliner's thunder. Newly invigorated by either their absence from British boards or by 'London Calling', or perhaps just fighting back after their Boxing Day gig ended in bad spirits, they shook as much rage out of the songs as their myth could stand.

That myth will be the end of them! The myth of The Clash as urban guerillas with guitars for guns and brilliantine for berets. The more they endure it and the less they live up to it the more I like them. If we're going to have heroes let's have human heroes, not just handy vessels on which to project fantasies of revolution as style.

People doing this have made the Clash turn in on themselves — as you might doubt yourself and seek affirmation somehow were you elevated to such giddy heights —and make an indulgent, personal album that ironically exposes all the fallacies of the myth as well as high-lighting its realities. 'London Calling' is a naked record made by a group with a lead guitarist of tireless vanity who writes dippy, sentimental words, and a strong, idealistic leader who likes reggae, rhythm'n'blues and George Orwell, and makes valuable propaganda against the clampdown.

Ask them if they are the catalyst that sparks the revolution, though, and they'd have to laugh.

On this particular night the group played 'Clash City Rockers' 'Brand New Cadillac', 'Safe European Home', 'Jimmy Jazz' — at which point Micky Gallagher joined them on organ — 'Clampdown', 'Guns Of Brixton', 'Train In Vain', 'Wrong Em Boyo', 'White Man', 'Stay Free' and 'Janie Jones'.

It was a strain. They always work hard on stage but it's a long time since they've been in a position where they had to. 'Armagiddeon Time' and 'London Calling' replaced their erstwhile finale of the seat-smashing song and the first round of what may turn out to be many over the coming months went to The Clash on points.

Ian Dury was wearing his Uncle Jam hat for the evening, taking a cue from the Clinton revue he admires and adding a revolving jamboree of musicians from the supporting cast to enhance the uniqueness of the occasion as well as the confusion on stage.

It appears Mr Dury is floundering a bit these days. His musical director has deserted, leaving him to wonder what a key is if it isn't for opening doors. His last album and single disappointed him as much and probably for the same reasons as it disappointed his fans, who were very slow to respond to the few newer numbers included and didn't seem to mind the exclusion of 'Reasons To Be Cheerful' one bit. And the novel impact Dury had has inevitably waned. Some people even think he was really B. A. Robertson all along.

All of which is rather fickle and trivial when you confront the phenomenon of the man himself.

A not very handsome ageing cripple who shouldn't be doing this anyway on account of his weak heart, obsessed to the point of lunacy who comes on stage in front of a Christmas family audience of little kids held aloft, teenagers being teenagers and grown-ups thinking it's a bit loud after all, saying words that make no sense but still make people laugh, and then lurches into 'Blackmail Man' and 'Blockheads' — some of the most violent and demented music I've ever heard!

The next two songs — from 'Do It Yourself' — Dury performs with his back to the audience, out of self-effacement, shame, sheer perversity, or none of these. He turns around in time to catch the cheer that greets 'What A Waste' — which brings home again the superlative musical muscle of The Blockheads. 'Clevor Trever' ushers in Dennis Bovelle and the rest of Matumbi and allows Davey Payne — man of the match — to lay on some of his own special brand of "kitchen sink drama".

'Sweet Gene Vincent' then allows Mick Jones to show off some fresh poses.

"This one's got four chords in it, alright Michael?" jibes Dury.

Topper Headon joins in the mayhem and Matumbi and Jones leave for 'Hit Me', then Joe Strummer and Pearl Gates aid the ascent into 'Twenty Flight Rock'. Two Kilburns' songs and 'My Old Man' bring proceedings to a sudden, unexpected halt.

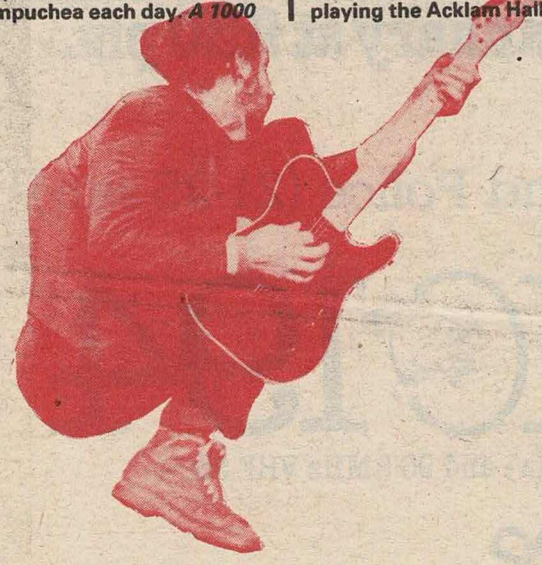
The obvious tension between the demands of the audience and the need to move on from 'New Boots And Panties' was lifted by the crazy circus on stage but still palpably under-cut the atmosphere. We swung from rapt attention to distraction and back like children at a circus.

The encore was slow in coming. When it came, Dury announced that there's a song that's been dogging him wherever he went for the last two and a half years — "and this is the very last time The Blockheads are going to play this particular item. If you still want to sing along after that, you can."

No prizes for guessing that the song was 'Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll' and that the reading wasn't what you'd call inspired.

Reflecting on Dury's present fate made me feel curiously greedy. We should be grateful. If Ian Dury never has another hit and goes back to the pubs he will still be Ian Dury and that will still be more than anyone could bargain for.

Paul Rambali

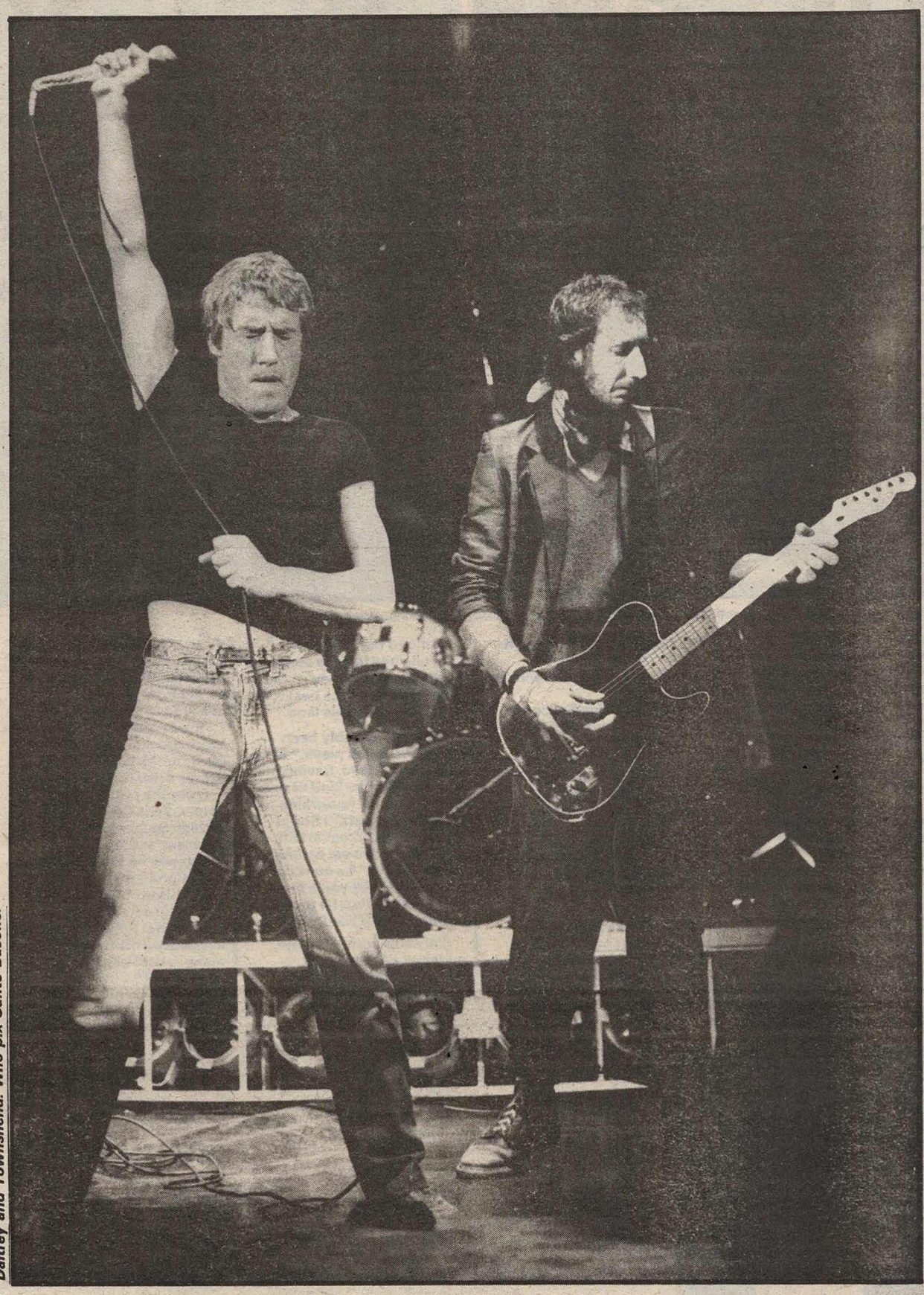


The Who
The Specials
The Pretenders

DIVIDE three bands by eight quid and multiply by seven hours and whaddawegot? (Anyone can answer this question except Jimmy Pursey). The answer is of course — opens envelope, tries to look surprised, fails — rock and roll with its good cause badge on: The Pretenders, The Specials and The 'Oo doing the business on behalf of Kampuchea on a Friday night at Hammersmith's fine Odeon.

Amidst a barrage of records

Of '80s Rock 'n' Roll



Daltrey and Townshend. Who pix Santo Basone.

The Kampuchea Benefits at Hammersmith Odeon

from Barry Myers, The Pretenders take the stage to a round of applause not significantly quieter than that with which they will leave it 45 minutes later.

A late addition to the bill, cramped for space and time and certainly not adequately sound checked, the ingredients are — in order of prominence in the sound mix — James Honeyman-Scott's over-inflated, grandstanding Les Paulverising, Pete Farndon's bass and Chrissie Hynd's voice and Telecaster coming in just ahead of the drums.

Though the singles went down a treat and things improved drastically once the vocals got cranked a little, The Pretenders failed to establish any real audience rapport. Each successive number garnished a respectable quantity of applause, but any goodwill thus built up seemed to have evaporated by the time the next one began. Chrissie was terrific, but Honeyman-Scott's complacent impression of '73-style Mick Ronson didn't help at all, and his ending 'Stop Your Sobbing' in the middle instead of at the end provoked a sharp "You workin' tonight, Jim?" from the frontperson.

Chrissie's mock-apologetic "We're still a little small-time for this place" was incomfortably close to the mark.

The Specials were on fire-breathing form, determined to beat the audience into submission by any means necessary and make The Who look like the proverbial, uh, garden fete by comparison. That they didn't entirely succeed was certainly not due to any lack of effort. With Terry Hall's petulant drone and baleful gaze acting as the eye of the hurricane, Jerry Dammers' Howling Commandos made a tableful of Mexican jumping beans resemble a still life by Cezanne.

Neville Staples, kitted out for the occasion in white pants, T-shirt and gloves, jumped on or over anything that could possibly be jumped on or over, danced on or over same and — for 'Monkey Man' — brought a note of genuine suspense into the proceedings by swarming up a cable and threatening to topple a lighting rig into the audience.

A large clump of humans roughly equivalent to a capacity Nashville audience danced down the front, and everybody else in the audience was subjected to a vitriolic verbal from Hall: "What the fuck did you pay eight quid for anyway?" and the like. (They paid eight quid to see three ageing drunks and a sawn-off bodybuilder, but that's another matter).

The Specials are a well-drilled ska army: they evince alarming degrees of precision, empathy and enthusiasm. At any given moment in the set, everybody is doing something (apart from Hall, who has mastered the art of Just Standing There to an extent unprecedented in a man who does not play the bass), but whether it's a touch of 'theatrics' like the Dammers/Staples strobe-lit mock-ruck during 'Concrete Jungle' or the Judge Roughneck routine as opposed to mass displays of running on the spot and that o-o-o-o-o-o-old mo-o-o-o-onstompin', there is much lotion in The Specials motion.

As a projection of Jerry Dammers' 2-Tone vision of high-spirited co-operation, songs like 'It Doesn't Make It Alright' and 'Do The Dog' are powerful and to the point, demonstrating most effectively that The Specials are by no means a triumph of form over content, but this spectator (at least) could do without the discordantly misogynistic note that sours the 2-Tone symphony.

The Specials may not have succeeded in upstaging The Who, but they can draw consolation from the fact that people have been trying to upstage The Who for 15 years, and they certainly did better than most.

The Who strolled onstage at ten to fire crisp, compact versions of 'Substitute' and 'I Can't Explain' and staggered off two hours and 20 minutes later after a great sprawling colossus of a set that seemed to include every major Who number that anyone (including Townshend himself) could remember. My first Moonless Night with The Who.

Let us not belabour the point (chuck it around a bit, but not actually belabour it): The Who have been around for a bit, but their present audience is young(ish) and sharp(ish). Despite Barry Myers playing the same records that he'd play at a Clash gig (minus, of course, The Clash tracks) and the remaining echoes of the Massed Rudies, no sense of time warp descends as The Who slope on. Townshend's baggy red pants, black'n'maple Schectercaster and Strummerish bandana seem contemporary without concessions. Daltrey poses, but Townshend dances: they seem far less self-conscious than at any other time during the '70s.

The axis has shifted one way, though: Kenny Jones' instrumental style allies itself more with Entwistle's stolidity rather than Townshend's mania, and John 'Rabbit' Bundrick's keyboards seem a little too obtrusive for comfort. But the distinction between new and old Who seems more blurred than ever: this 'Oo exist purely in the present. It's just that the present is in the past (am I going too slowly for you?)

Townshend promised not to lecture the audience unless he got drunker: he must've stayed at the same level of alcoholic content throughout, because the threatened lecture never arrived. (A lot of tedious bluesing *did* arrive towards the end, much to Daltrey's obvious displeasure.)

"Aren't you glad that you live in London and not in poxy Kampuchea?" he taunted the audience at one point.

Ask me what they played. (Go on, ask. The next sentence doesn't work unless you do). Bleedin' *everything!* They even chucked in *three* set-enders: climax ONCE with 'See Me, Feel Me,' climax TWICE with 'My Generation,' climax THRICE with 'Won't Get Fooled Again,' all three songs resonating with new overtones in the light of current events, and Townshend's relish for the way the songs hit different targets now is delightfully apparent.

Two and a half hours was pushing the attention span more than somewhat, but at least an hour and a half of it was purest magic, definitive evidence that burning out and rusting are by no means the only alternatives left to superannuated rock and rollers. The Who have patently done neither, proving consistently interesting and creative over a longer period than any of their competitiors.

Pete Townshend is a contemporary of The Rolling Stones; he's also a contemporary of The Clash. He's a contemporary of anyone who's done anything good and worthwhile in rock and roll since 1965. It's food for thought, mobsters — if you wanna be a hero, just follow him.

The last person who followed The Who was Jimi Hendrix in 1967, and he had to burn a Stratocaster to do it.

Charles Shaar Murray

Wings
Elvis Costello & The Attractions
Rockpile

CONTRARY to all expectations, *they* didn't reform especially for the occasion.

So the story goes, when UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim put a call through to John Lennon in an attempt to coax him out of retirement, Yoko answered the phone to explain that they were in the midst of role reversal — Johnny was childminding. Even so, Yoko didn't appear in her husband's place, but Linda McCartney got to sing 'Cook Of The House!'

"I've seen three of The Applejacks backstage," jested the evening's compere Billy Connolly at the start of the show in a veiled attempt to gently defuse recurring reunion rumours and possibly to prevent demands for a refund. But then, did anyone but the most gullible seriously believe that *they'd* reunite? And in any case, had the Second Coming actually taken place at Hammersmith Odeon, *they'd* have been hard-put to follow the other Fab Fours on the bill.

When it came to the crunch, McCartney and Co couldn't.

The entire energy output of Wings' set never once came close to that generated with such ease during Rockpile's definitive cover of 'The Promised Land' and Costello & The Attractions' pulverising encore of 'Pump It Up'. By 11.30 pm Wings had all but completed their lack-lustre set without receiving more than polite appreciation. In an effort to force the issue and elicit some kind of demonstrative crowd reaction, McCartney used the rather lame excuse of reviving numb-bums to get the audience out of their seats and on their feet and, five minutes later, to clapalongawings.

The flock obeyed with blind but reserved obedience.

By rights, this should have been Wings' toughest acid-test to date — being forced, out of both self-respect and circumstances, to compete in a winner-takes-all battle of the bands; to try first to shut-down Rockpile and then dispatch The Attractions. But they didn't even bother and completely chickened out.

As far as the bill-toppers were concerned, it was just another cosy reactionary Wings rent-a-crowd who demanded nothing more tangible than utterly contrived sentimentality, thread-bare nostalgia, received 'Back To The Egg' extracts with polite indifference, but went positively apeshit over 'Yesterday' and 'The Mull Of Kintyre'.

Attired in long black undertakers' frockcoats,

Continues over

◗ *From previous page*

Wings had the appearance of a minor-league Wally band but chose to present a slip-shod show that would guarantee them endless Summer Seasons in Great Yarmouth. Only the opener 'Got To Get You Into My Life' and 'Maybe, I'm Amazed' came remotely close to suggesting any semblance of commitment.

As things are it's basically a painting-by-numbers operation. Denny Laine is permanently shackled to 'Go Now', the once biting brass team display the clock-watching enthusiasm of a veteran palais band, while McCartney should spend some time hanging out with Rockpile if he's serious about incorporating material like Eddie Cochran's '20 Flight Rock' into his repertoire.

Perhaps Wings no longer serve any real purpose for their leader other than being a none-too-serious hobby. So before Paul and Linda evolve into the Bruce and Anthea of the Rock Generation, perhaps it's time to put Wings into a crash-dive, form a new band or maybe take a gig as bassist in someone else's. Even the guest appearance of the cast-of-thousands Rockestra didn't really present any real surprises except for train-spotters.

They twanged the Rockestra theme (or whatever they call it) twice, avoided any serious chord collisions during 'Lucille' and tip-toed through 'Let It Be'.

Under normal circumstances, the audience should have been out of their seats and rushing the stage the moment Rockpile opened the marathon by slamming straight into 'Sweet Little Lisa' and, after encoring with 'Singing The Blues' should have chaired them shoulder-high for their efforts.

There's such an abundance of world-class talent in Rockpile that it's remarkable (let alone an achievement) that just one unit can accommodate it all so effectively. But then, such compatability is such an integral part of their appeal.

Rockpile not only possess three extremely strong frontmen (plus drummer Terry Williams, a power unto himself) but above all their one major asset is their unselfish ability to deploy themselves to everyone's mutual advantage.

Only the *very* best of their collective repertoire ever makes the final gig check-lists. Hits are kept to a minimum ('Crawling From The Wreckage', 'Queen Of Hearts', 'Cruel To Be Kind' and 'Girls Talk') to the extent that any song, no matter what its origins, is only used if it enables the 'Pile to celebrate rock 'n' roll.

Of the 15 quick-fire songs performed, Dave Edmunds grabbed eight, Nick Lowe handled three, Billy Bremner impressed with 'Trouble Boys' and 'Born Fighter', while all three got a crack at a chorus of 'JuJu Man'. By way of a mid-set bonus, Robert Plant made a low-key guest appearance on Presley's 'Little Sister'. But being dressed in an uncharacteristic oatmeal jacket and white scarf, a lot of people didn't realise they'd just seen the ol' lemon squeezer in an unusual cameo role.

Come to think of it, once Rockpile had left the stage far too few realised they'd also seen just one of the best rock 'n' roll bands in this land.

"You've probably been eating turkey all week," Elvis Costello quipped, having just opened with the kind of raw intensity of his reworking of The Merseybeats' 'I Stand Accused' that most artists spend an entire set carefully building. "So," he continued, "we've brought you a few more!" With that he promptly slammed into 'The Beat'.

Only someone with the audacity *and* ability of Costello would have the unwavering confidence to directly follow Rockpile and, at the same time, take the opportunity of giving Wings an object lesson on the rewards of taking a flyer.

And Costello earned a much more genuine response for his unpredictability than Wings drew for playing safe.

From the outset of his career, Elvis Costello has always been in the high risk business and it's his insistence on taking chances — tonight devoting half of his set to his unreleased album — that makes his approach so subversive. It's a ploy which has proved disastrous for many artists (including himself), but Costello insists on playing by his own set of rules and is quite prepared to fully accept the consequences.

But Elvis Costello demands attention, and naturally the squirt confounded the cynics by pulling it off and proving his point.

'Oliver's Army' was his only safe bet. Not only have songs like 'Chelsea' and 'Watching The Detectives' been given a complete overhaul, but the familiar shiny vinyl organ has been replaced by Steve Naive's pumping a Booker T croak from his Hammond, while the firm of B and T Thomas match the moods with appropriate Stax and Motown rhythms. Even the new single, 'I Can't Stand Up For Falling Down' is Costello's highly-personalised R&B shout. 'Girls Talk' deviates from Edmunds' cover in that it's kitted out with a straight 4/4 mid-'60s Tamla tempo. And an unannounced original cheekily flaunts the bass intro from "I Heard It Through The Grapevine'.

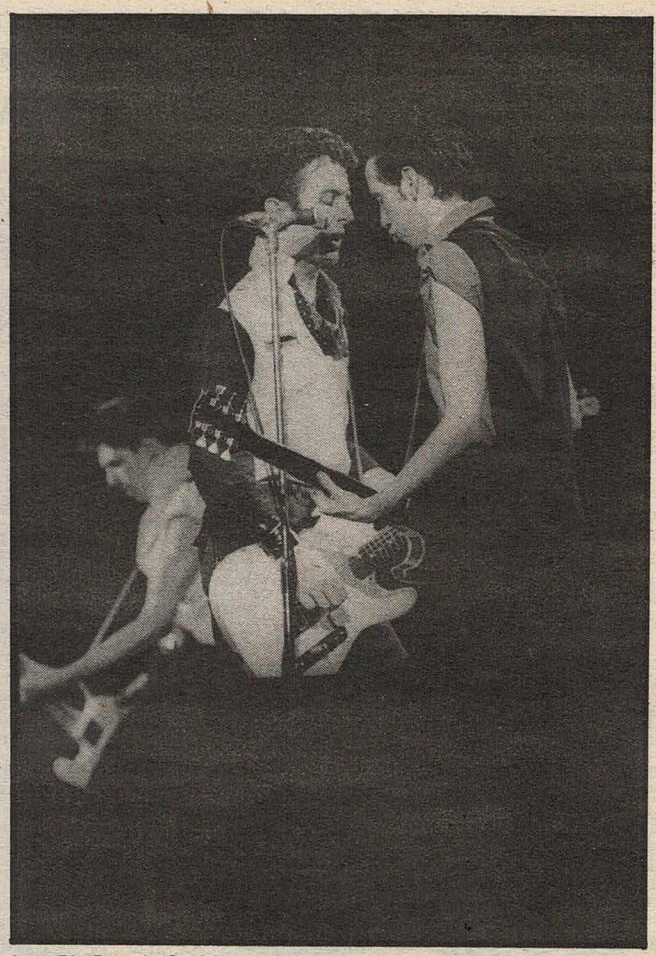
In the past The Attractions have never been confined to the role of accompanists, but the newer material now gives them even more scope, with Elvis often dropping out to allow them to project their own identity.

The overall sound-mix may have enabled Costello and friends to pack the kind of whallop that Wings couldn't aspire to, but in the process it was often extremely difficult to begin to decipher the lyrics of such new songs as 'Possessions', 'The Imposter' and 'High Fidelity'.

The overall quality of the performance, the feel of knowing that someone is in there winning completely, washed away any hesitation in accepting such a canon of first-time listening material. As if that wasn't sufficient to impress everyone, the encore of 'Pump It Up' stripped the enamel off one's molars.

But then, it's a proven fact that rock music rots your teeth!

Roy Carr



Dury returns Jones to Strummer with thanks and a change of clothes. Pix Pennie Smith.

"API NOUILLES YEURE"

Best wishes to all our friends for a very Happy New Year with a french accent — and we look forward to seeing you all again in 1980

From Albert, Jean, Virginia Jean Robert, Marie-José, the dogs the cat and all at KCP.

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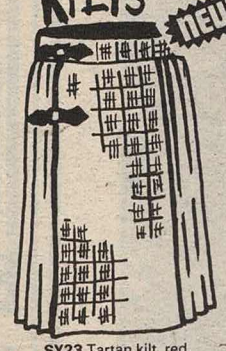

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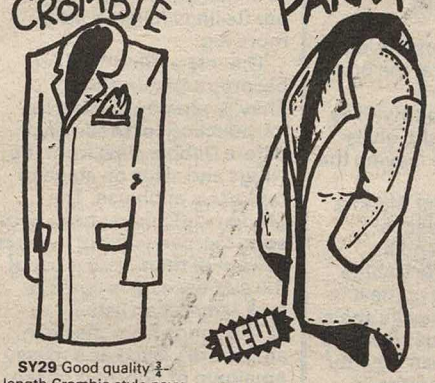

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Beat To The Meat

Selling Debbie by the pound. Pic Al Johnson.

Blondie

Leicester

DEBBIE Harry is dressed deliberately as a sensual, high-class slut. She wears red stilettos, black tights, loose dress slit to the hip, a black beret over the straight shock of platinum hair.

Out in the foyer they're selling her face. It has the soft flesh and brittle bones, the tainted fragility of a modern Monroe. On stage and blasted by lights it's whitely incandescent; you can clearly see its sharp structure right to the back of the hall. Like Marilyn, her medium should be celluloid; in England she's unwittingly damaging modern music.

If Blondie are still considered part of the old New Wave, it can only be by spurious American standards. Whether they know it or not, their appeal now lies in the laboured sexual exploitation of audience and performer that uses methods as reactionary as any employed by the macho HM heavyweights. But instead of caricaturing masculinity they have Debbie Harry to exaggerate and falsify her feminity.

At first she nervously treads a tight-rope between tarnished innocence and careful titillation, but a pattern appears: when she stalks the stage hand on hip and lapping up the lust, she's not too many steps behind a strutting stripper.

Her frailty's flouted too. She can hold a pose and stand so still that she's pensive, passive, vulnerably alone. Occasionally she slips into the excited mannerisms that are a sort of short-hand for emotional turmoil amongst American tragi-comediennes. Her dancing is nearly ungainly, almost uncontrolled. It's endearing until you realise that the brief bouts of frenzy are as self-consciously contrived as the skittish salute she gives the troops as she's leaving the stage.

I can't believe that Blondie have been powerless to control or understand a process that's made Debbie Harry another slab of meat in a dirty market. Ironically she's become anonymous; *faceless* in fact. It really doesn't matter how often she bares bits of her body or pieces of her brain, any real revelation is easily accommodated in the amorphous imaginings of millions of males.

And Blondie are not, as they think, playing to "kids." The average age of this audience is well above 20 and you can hear them cheering if any of her flailings reveal a little more leg.

The rest of Blondie have become a backing band. They're already playing the introduction to 'Dreaming' before Debbie slips from the wings and skips on stage to rapturous applause. The group would never have been so successful without her face in front of them, and most of the audience have come to look rather than listen.

The songs from the new album are played as a messy amalgam of pop/rock/disco that lacks the simple, superficial charm of those early exquisitely disposable singles. And they're still too slender for tougher treatment. Debbie's voice has acquired a new strength and richness but lost the characteristic crystal restraint that gave their sound its cool, external elegance.

They play nearly all the numbers from 'Eat To The Beat' including a version of the title track that tries to get dense and funky but is too tepid. It's a delicate, penetrating 'Heart Of Glass' that is the high-spot of the set: a synthesizer flutters, spotlights flicker, a mirrored dance-hall globe flicks flecks of light over the stage and although Frank Infante and Chris Stein play some chiming, cultured guitar, the song is more enjoyable in a disco and it doesn't work as well when the audience is transfixed by the stage.

There's also the favourites from 'Parallel Lines' ('Picture This,' 'Pretty Baby,' 'Sunday Girl,' 'Hanging On The Telephone,' 'One Way Or Another') and a slight, sparkling 'Denis' which reveals the comparatively flaccidity of the later material.

Blondie have slipped into the smooth stream of commercial entertainment and their artistic demise is marked by a personal tragedy that's just as depressing: Debbie Harry has given in, given up and never said no. She's consented to an act that leaves the participants stripped of integrity; making money by means of moral prostitution seems unlikely to pay off in satisfactory solutions for either sex.

Lynn Hanna

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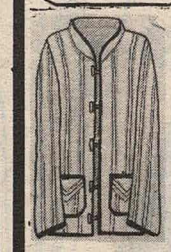

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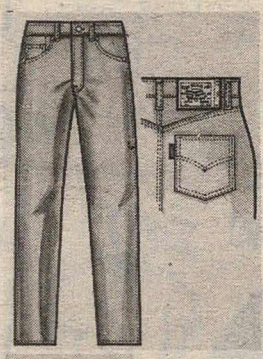

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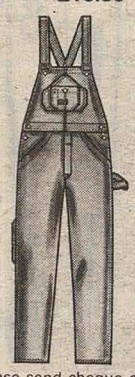

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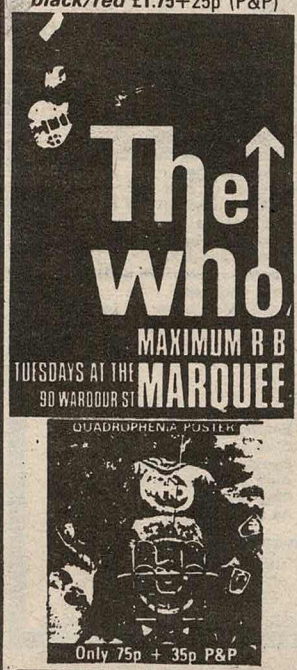

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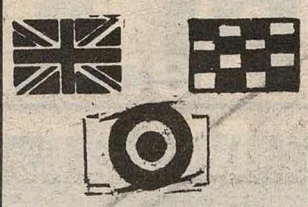

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Information CITY
EDITED BY FRED DELLAR

HAVE Island Records any plans to release some Sandy Denny material at a future date? I feel sure there must be some good quality tapes that could be issued as a final tribute to a very special singer.
BOB BLACKBURN, Clapham South, London SW4

● According to those potted-palm growers up at Hammersmith, it's very likely that a Sandy Denny release will be with us sometime during 1980. The famous A. Spokesman claimed: "If we do go ahead, the release will be something on the lines of the Nick Drake set — a possible three-album job, packaged properly. We want to do the job right and include material spanning material covering the whole of Sandy's career, including some tracks which have not yet seen the light of day."

I WONDER if you can help me find a record of the Red Army singing the 'Internationale', preferably on a single.
A. GRAHAM, Kelvinbridge, Glasgow

● Reggae or disco version?

IN a recent *Shoestring* episode (BBC 1, December 2) there was a young lady featured, called (I think) Toyah Willcox. Can you supply any info?
S. PACK, Havant, Hants.

● Toyah Willcox, who was the subject of *NME* article some months back, is a part English, part-Spanish, show-biz lady signed to Safari Records. She's played opposite Katy Hepburn along the way and has also appeared in such movies as *Jubilee* and *Quadrophenia*, her future actings gigs including a sizeable role in TV's forthcoming *Dr Jekyll series, starring David Hemmings. Disc-wise, she and her band, which is also known as Toyah, have released a two-part single, 'Victims Of The Riddle' (SAFE 15, July 1979) plus a six-track 7" AP (that's Safari's idea of a cross between an EP and an LP) known to the trade as 'Sheep Farming In Barnet' (SAP 1, August 1979). A new single is due shortly and will probably be one of the songs that bedecked the recent Shoestring* episode.

Toyah Wilcox muses on the antiquity of the Info City logo.

I CAUGHT up with the Paul Newman movie *Slap Shot* recently and, apart from enjoying the action, also liked the jukebox-type soundtrack. Could you list all the music used in the film and tell me is a 'Slap Shot' album been released either here or in the States?
W. YOUNG, Edgware, Middx

● After peering at the British Film Institute's supply of micro-fiche for the umpteenth time in the past few weeks — thus becoming the only cross-eyed journalist in Carnaby Street — I came up with the info that Elmer Bernstein provided the film's incidental music, while records used included 'Sorry Seems To Be The Hardest Word' (Elton John), 'Right Back Where We Started From' (Maxine Nightingale), 'Rhiannon', 'Say That You Love Me' (Fleetwood Mac), 'A Little Bit South Of Saskatoon' (Sonny James) and 'You Make Me Feel Like Dancing' (Leo Sayer). No soundtrack album has yet been released — not even by Ronco or K-Tel!

I HAVE some further info on the (Count) Bishops discography. 'Taking It Easy'/'Train Train' was first issued in Holland on Dynamo Records DYR 45001 and from the same sessions came the incredibly rare LP on Dynamite Records called 'Good Gear' (DYR 33001). The Chiswick single 'I Want Candy' came out as NS37, CHIS 101 as a 6" item numbered NS376 and 6CHIS101, also appearing as a 10" on NS37101 and 10CHIS 101. Promo 1 was a taster for the 'Count Bishops' LP, containing 'Good Guys', 'Taste And Try', 'I Need You' and 'Talk To You', while Promo 4 (a 6" job) featured 'Train Rain' and 'Good Guys' plus excerpts from the 'Bishops Live' LP, which itself came out initially as a 10", then a 12", whilst German pressings (on Metronome) contained two extra tracks. As for the unissued NS35 — that exists as a white label and contains the original version of 'Mr Jones' backed by the excellent 'Too Much Too Soon'. Vinyl junkies may also like to know that Italian Movie Play released 'You're In My Way'/'Good Guys' and that EMI Australia issued 'No Lies'/'Waiting For Saturday Night'. Further waffle includes production duties by Johnny Guitar and Zenon de Fleur on Blast Furnace and The Heat Waves 'Blue Wave' EP (Nighthawk HOT 1) and Zenon de Fleur on Blast's single 'South Of The River' (HOT 2). Finally, as you probably know, Mike Spencer, from the original '75 Count Bishop line-up, had two singles on his own Big Cock label — 'Godd Guys'/'Nothing Takes The Place Of You' (FUK 1) and 'Nadine'/'You Can't/'Sweet Little 16" which came out as Hit FUK 2. Move over, Pete Frame!
MAREK, London W1

● Er . . . . . quite!

I BOUGHT Jade Warriot's 'Way Of The Sun' album a short while ago and really rate it. How about a full run-down on the band?
L. DIXON, Shepperton, Middlesex.

● Members of the CIA (Carnaby Incompetents Association) helped me track down Tony Duhig, who with fellow multi-instrumentalist Jon Field comprises the duo that is Jade Warrior. Asking us to call back later as he was still in his pyjamas, Duhig then did the whole history bit for us, revealing: "Jon and I first met at Lyons' in Greenford, where we both working as fork-lift truck drivers. Around 1964 we started a band called Second Thoughts, which included Patrick Campbell-Lyons (of Nirvana) as vocalist, while Speedy Keen later joined as conga drummer. Then Jon, Speedy and I teamed up with Tom Newman (producer of several Mike Oldfield albums) as The Tomcats, a band that did pretty well in Spain, where we spent 11 months."

The Tomcats eventually, with the aid of vocalist Glyn Havard and guitarist Tom Moeller (later of Unit Four plus Two), became July and cut an album for Major Minor which Newman has described as "The extremely poor man's Sgt. Pepper', recorded in just three days". A split followed, after which Duhig and Field provided a series of seven dance dramas at Guildford University, one of which was titled 'Jade Warrior'. Next, the duo got together with Glyn Havard once more and sent a tape to Phonogram, which was accepted, resulting in an album, also titled 'Jade Warrior', which came out on Vertigo 6360 033 in 1971 Two more albums followed, 'Released' ((6360 062) and 'Autumn's Dream' (6360 079), these gaining a foothold on the lower end of the U.S. charts in 1972. A trip to the States ensued, though Duhig remembers: "We were supposed to tour with Dave Mason but there was a problem with the permits when we got there and we ended up doing very few gigs."

It was at this stage that Chris Blackwell phoned Duhig and Field, asking them to sign for Island — which they did, cutting a series of instrumental albums that has included 'Floating World' (ILPS 9240 — 1974), 'Waves' (ILPS 92552 — 1978), all charting in the States while not causing so much as a ripple in the UK. "More recently we did the soundtrack for *Gain For Vultures*, the new Richard Harris film," says Duhig.

A compilation by Jade Warrior, called 'Reflections' was recently released by Butt Records (Butt 001) and I guess it's worth mentioning that along with Assagai, Kilburn and The High Roads, John Martyn, Rod Stewart and others, also supplying a song for the Lee Van Cleef movie *Bad Man's River* (1971).

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☐ From page 18

Singles

WHIZZKIDS: Paye As You Earn (Dead Good). Hey you, don't buy that — buy this. If you felt the first Pistols album was *the* record of the '70s then never mind the bollocks Virgin have been throwing your way ever since, this record is THE BUSINESS. Not so much 1977 rehashed note for note, more as if the Pistols had for some reason remained together and continued to develop their early direction: rude, dangerous and aggressively sloppy.

Great playing, developed just far enough from straight punk powerchords to stay interesting *and* exciting. Chilling lyrics: *"Don't wanna taste the gravy when the meat's gone cold and hard/or (be) in the crematorium with money to burn . . ."* And from the sleeve picture they look suitably unpleasant. As to the bad news, the vocal style is too close to '77 Lydon for comfort — me, I prefer the man first-hand and up-to-date; also the other three tracks on the EP aren't anything like as good as 'P.A.Y.E.'. But that's very good indeed.

RUDI: Big Time (Good Vibrations).
OUTCASTS: Selfconscious Over You (Good Vibrations).
RUEFREX: One By One EP (Good Vibrations)
These should need no introduction to Peel addicts — at least this reissue of the Rudi classic and the excellent Outcasts single . . . Thankfully, the rumours that Good Vibrations have already folded prove to be grossly exaggerated: these and over a dozen other titles are still currently available direct from 102 Gt Victoria Street, Belfast BT1 7BE at a quid each inclusive. Whatever detractors may say, Good Vibes have done the N.I. music scene untold good in two short years and need all the help and support they can get right now.

MICK DOREY & THE SIRENS: Paranoia Station (Illegal). On tape you'd never guess this was an offering from Faulty Products: a pre-punk and supremely timeless production sound that could've come from anywhere between 1967 and 1976 — specially the madcap laughter. Catchy choone tho'. Mick Dorey's a talented geezer and it's only as Berlin says a matter of time before he cracks it, but to be honest I can't see which audience 'Paranoia Station' will appeal to enough for it to happen.

Just Fancy That Dept "'Paranoia Station' was illegally produced & recorded. This involved stealing studio time from those of means. Guy Fawkes got it wrong. We haven't." (Illegal Records press release). "All rights of the manufacturers reserved. Unauthorised public performance, broadcasting and copying prohibited." (Illegal record label). Still, far be it from me to throw stones .

TONY WRIGHT: The Galloping Whip (Arista/Hunt 1). At last, a record R.A.B. can really get their teeth into: Arista, in their infinite sensitivity, have realised the demand for a fine value-for-money EP of traditional hunting songs and come up with this excellent outing by Tony Wright. Not, let me hasten to add, the graphic artist of the same name but "first whipper-in to the Quorn . . . often in the enviable position of heralding the start of another hectic dash over the fields and fences of Leicestershire". The title track features some splendid orchestration in fitting "Yeomen Of England" idiom, together with lines such as *"Reynard, poor devil is caught in the grip/of whitecollar Will and his Galloping Whip, tallyho!"*

Tallyho indeed.

SPIZZ ENERGI: Where's Captain Kirk (Rough Trade). How do you think he does it? The irrespressible Spizz roars back with a daft *Star Trek* saga (guess who's in the starring role) with thirdhand Clashchords and space FX in the background. Chris Bohn gave this prime billing the other week and it's easy to see why. There's something utterly endearing about Spizz that inspires anything from fnantical devotion in his followers through to amused tolerance from even the most hardened critics (I fall somewhere between the two), by sheer force of personality. Live, only Spizz or The Kinks could have got away with the shambles I saw a few weeks ago at the 'F' Club, and Spizz alone could get hardcore punks pogoing wildly to a record as loopy as this — as they undoubtedly will wherever two or three are gathered together at concerts, clubs and parties across the globe. Destined for the top of the alternative charts.

From page 20

MINDS OUT

difference between the two LP's is Simple Minds' attitude towards recording. Upset by the weakness of 'Life In A Day', shaken by criticism, but still confident the group accidentally discovered that the role of the studio can be altered.

"A studio can be a bit of a factory. It's got all these rules that you just don't do: you don't do that! And we thought this time we're just going to do things and dismiss the rules. . .we're not going to be bothered if the needle goes into the red, you know?"

They used the same producer, John Leckie.

Kerr: "He's very good. We didn't demo anything before we went into the studio, all we had were cassettes with little bits on and we talked with him and we knew that we had to get a sound of our own. If the two LP's had sounded the same we wouldn't have wanted to work with him again because there wouldn't have been any point. But this time we just questioned everything, even in the vocals.

"On the first LP they were so held back, bland and smooth. But this time I just wrote everything down, sat back for half an hour, working it all out, then I'd go in and say: Right, I'm going to do it now, and catch the spontaneous feel. That's what it all comes from. All the songs on the first LP we'd been doing for a year, so perhaps we were a bit bored with them and had lost the feel.

That's why this time we just went in and that's going to be our attitude from now on. On edge, where you have to make spot decisions. It wasn't very safe and that felt good."

Simple Minds incorporated the opportunities, potential and atmosphere of the recording studio into the compositional procedure. The notion that groups come across best live means that the studio is not an obstacle but an instrument, a form of catalyst.

"We didn't go in with songs and record them. We went in and turned on the tape and talked through ideas. A really different approach.

"Charlie got a sax a week before and we went into the studio and he'd never played it before, but he played it here and there on the LP, and I think it's great to mix competence and incompetence."

Where does the LP put Simple Minds?

"It gives us a lot more depth than we ever had. And although we're really happy with it, it's only a starting point in the direction that we want to take.

"We had to take risks with this LP. We had to go for a change. . .

"I'd like to hear what the reaction to the LP would have been if it was our first. I know that's an easy thing for us to say — oh yeah, the first doesn't count — but in some ways this *is* our first. We had an attitude of our own; we had more of a hand in the production; we felt we could incorporate each instrument much better."

Kerr says that an ideal response to Simple Minds' music would be for other groups to name them as influences. "Also, a great response to the LP is when people say they played it once and they hated it, but after a few times they really loved it."

FOR ALL Kerr's hopes and the dense inventiveness of 'Real To Real', the LP has drifted away thanks to a combination of established prejudices and record company apathy. Simple Minds remain unsteady, in one way obscure, in another on the verge of probable commercial success as a fashion group. Both ways have their different absurd pressures.

Ever since they signed with a major label they've been fighting to get out so that they're only working for themselves. They view commercial success as appealing in that people are reached, but also as destructive. They just want to continue to create and maintain a balance between communication, compromise and commercial cynicism. A dangerous life.

"Our main aim must be to take off live so that we can make enough money to be totally independent and self-supporting so that when it comes to being dropped, which they'll have to do, we should have a good following and some money." Then they'll be able to make the music they want to make.

Perhaps that label we were reluctantly groping for a few hundred lines ago is SF (Science fiction? Speculative fabulation? Space fish? Surly fingering? Oh! The old arguments!)

We talk about words, Kerr likes words.

"It's weird. I haven't really conquered reading yet. My reading on the road, in the van, you just can't do it. . .and at school it was always a task, and the only time I got to read was at night in bed and you could only get ten minutes. Most of the things that I've read have been the cliched things, it's exactly as people say, Huxley, Burroughs. . ."

Did you enjoy them?

"Oh yeah. . .I'm beginning to get into it more and more. I can't stand really shitty books, like some of the band get at service stations. Right now I'm reading Vonnegut, it's like all headlines, but I like the sense of humour in it. I think he's got good ideas as well. To gain knowledge you have to read. I've always tried to think as much as I could. I like time just to think."

Yes, there's a charm about Simple Minds, but also a toughness, and something a little sinister. 'Real To Real Cacophony' is unusually stimulating. I listen to it like I listen to 'Future Days', 'Another Green World', Peter Hammill's 'Camera', Roxy 1 and 2, 'Real Life', 'Fear'. . .for whatever reason.

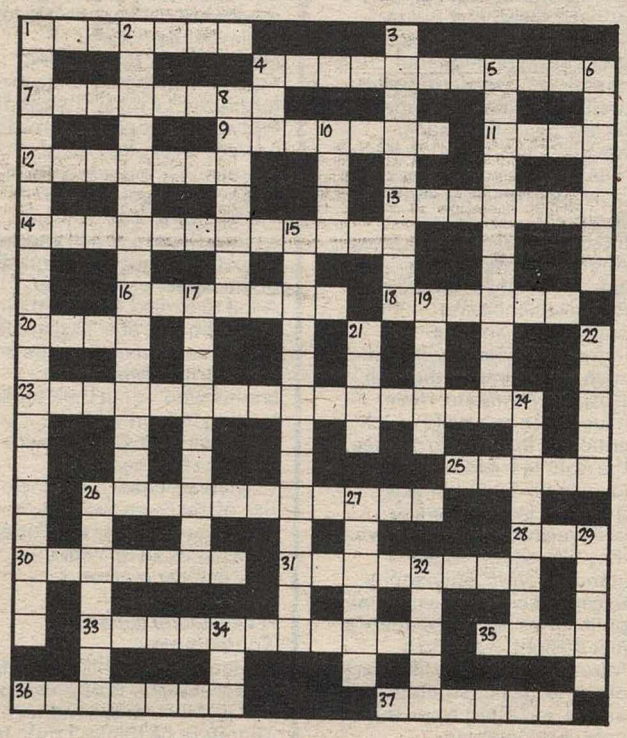
"It would be easy to be weird for weird's sake. That's the easiest way out. I just don't know where our destiny lies, which is a great thing."

ACROSS

1 2-Town Motoners?! (sic) (3,4)
4 Bowie album from 'Rebel Rebel' period (7,4)
7 Rutland Weekend Pythonite (4,4)
9 Alice Cooper's equally successful follow-up to 'School's Out'
11 A Hot Chocolate Greatest Hit
12 Last seen crawling from the wreckage
13 No biros Roy?!
14 Dry larger toe (anag. 2 words)
16 Ace's Greatest Hit! (3,4)
18 Airborne turkeys from LA
20 Gape at the Zeppelin?!
23 Quo's tax exile single? Jersey or the Bahamas?! (6, 2, 2, 6)
25 Derek's oppo
26 Heavy Lester (anag. 2 words)
28 Slits elpee
30 Motors smash from '78
31 '....Ride' (6, 2)
33 See 37
35 Joni Mitchell album sold under plain cover!?
36 See 17
37 & 33 Seminal New York avant garde combo

DOWN

1 Whose ball? John Cleese, Peter Cook, Billy Connolly and Michael Palin can testicle to ownership! (3, 6, 10)
2 B Springsteen wrote it; P Smith had the hit (7, 3, 5)
3 Kryptic Kwikkie: Remove part of upmarket car, replace with flower, emerge with US soul combo! (4, 5)
4 & 6 Falsetto-voiced US singer whose biggest '60s hits included 'Runaway' and 'Swiss Maid'
5 Australian-born Soft Machine founder who subsequently formed Gong and created the Radio Gnome Invisible trilogy (6, 5)
6 See 4 down
8 US guitarist who gave his name to the most famous of all guitars (3, 4)
10 Sonny had a bit of Margaret Thatcher!
15 They once held the record for US tours by a UK band (pity nobody told them when to stop) (3, 5, 5)
17 & 36 McCartney triple set recorded during US concert series (5, 4, 7)



19 Fab Four fruit!?
21 Kryptic Reprise: Each ice cream contains a disco additive!
22 & 24 A contemporary of Rod Stewart and John Baldry, her's was the voice of the Brian Auger Trinity.
24 See above
26 Stevie Wonder's 45 rpm version of Burke's Peerage?! (3, 4)
27 London dance hall and rock venue
29 Fishy sounding part of hi-fi system!
32 Floyd or Jobson
34 Bowie's label

LAST WEEK'S XMAS SPECIAL ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1 'Confusion'; 5 Deep Purple; 8 Specials; 12 Marvin Gaye; 15 Judas Priest; 17 Lovin' Spoonful; 18 ELO; 19 'I'm A Believer'; 20 Impressions; 23 Unit (4 plus 2); 25 Abba; 27 Eric Clapton; 28 Johnny (Cash); 30 'Band (On The Run)'; 32 'Pearl'; 33 Van Morrison; 35 Dub; 36 Joni (Mitchell); 37 Tubeway (Army); 39 Edwin Starr; 41 (David) Gates; 42 (Rick) Parfitt; 43 '(Band) On The Run'; 44 Peter (Asher); 45 Errol (Dunkley); 48 (Paul) Anka; 49 Dobie Grey; 50 (Gladys) Knight; 55 'Gertcha'; 57 Ian Dury; 58 Terry Hall; 61 Earl; 62 Leo (Sayer); 63 Steve Hackett; 64 (Tubeway) Army; 65 'Wet'; 66 'M.A.S.H.'; 68 Elvis Costello; 73 Arista; 75 Steve Winwood; 77 Ska; 78 Linda Lewis; 79 'Wow'; 80 (Rod) Stewart.

DOWN: 1 'Complex'; 2 'Union City Blue'; 3 Iggy Pop; 4 Gloria (Gaynor); 5 Dennis Wilson; 6 Paul (Anka); 7 (Francis) Rossi; 9 Patti (Smith); 10 Anderson; 11 Simon (Kirke); 13 'Rave On'; 14 Peter (Townshend or Shelley); 15 Julie Covington; 16 (Lene) Lovich; 21 (Lou) Reed; 22 'Neat Neat Neat'; 23 Undertones; 24 Stooges; 25 Andrew Gold; 26 Bass; 28 Janet Street-Porter; 29 'Your Song'; 31 Nina Hagen; 34 (Simon) Kirke; 38 'Blue Suede Shoes'; 40 'I Fought The Law'; 46 Rod (Stewart); 47 'Lodger'; 48 Attractions; 50 (Alexis) Korner; 51 (Anne) Nightingale; 52 'Ring My Bell'; 53 (Gallagher &) Lyle; 54 Fast; 56 'Holy (Cow)'; 59 Lee Perry; 60 '(Holy) Cow'; 67 Gladys (Knight); 69 (Paul) Cook; 70 (Johnny) Cash; 72 Bell; 73 Anne (Nightingale); 74 Star; 76 Duo.

TROUBLE IN THE WORLD
THE ONLY ONES New Single OUT NEXT WEEK
CBS

GASBAG

Mail your rail to: Gasbag, NME, 5-7 Carnaby St., London W.1.

IT'S fairly easy to surmise that the pro and anti-Nazi opinions expressed in the Christmas *Gasbag* are seasonably representative of their respective, opposing factions. It's also fairly easy to see where Monty Smith and, indeed, all involved in churning out our weekly *NME*, stand on all this. You unequivocally condemn those who have any 'Nazi-istic' tendencies and praise those who are totally against Nazism and its sympathisers, feting them as 'good people'. And quite rightly so too.

I live in Ireland, and have no experience of the activities or effects of the National Front or British Movement. But by God, I know what hatred and prejudiced, opinionated people are, and hatred and prejudice are worth opposing by any peaceful means. Nevertheless, what I find hard to take is the constant stream of articles, reviews and comments pleading for freedom of various kinds (eg Abortion, stated as the women's right to choose, Police violence and oppression) and the journalistic vigour with which such are defended through *Gasbag, Thrills* etc. Never have I seen an article which criticised the right to choose, the right to freedom on any level to be denied on any grounds. People have to believe and, in effect, do what they like, seems to be standard *NME* 'philosophy'. Except it seems on essentially political issues where there's just a 'Right' way and a 'Wrong' way — just like black or white, gay or straight, good or bad, eh? Oho! Now, this puts carping about Whitehouse, Thatcher etc well into perspective. You reject and ridicule their policies and standards on totalitarian and/or puritanical grounds — yet you're perfectly happy to impose your own when subjects *you* feel strongly about arise. Essentially, all I'm saying is that while the *NME* continues to criticise values and standards, it isn't afraid to set up a few of its own when needs arise.

Sixteen Gang Of Four albums, please?
Roy Meenan.

'When needs arise' is right, Roy. And when anyone thinks they're a better sort of animated ape than any other is good enough a time to be dogmatic, don't you think? — M.S.

I was disturbed at the fascist overtones in last week's *Gasbag.* Am I to understand that you take these morons seriously? As for the NF, I can still get a good laugh out of them. Next thing you know there'll be commies sprouting up to give them a thick ear. Sounds familiar, doesn't it?
Wee John, East Kilbride, Scotland.
So long as there're people as complacent as you we'll continue to point out the poison in our own dung heap. — M.S.

Don't worry, I'm not writing to support the views of Jan of Grimsby, but there's a point she tried to raise which is worth defending. Like she said, it ain't just the Nazis who committed inhuman atrocities. In fact, let any group of professional killers on the loose with the kind of power the army has in wartime and you get women raped, babies killed and possibily eaten, and whole new ways invented to have enormous fun whilst putting innocent people to death in the most obscene fashion possible. Just look at 18th-19th century paintings by Goya.

Still, it's interesting to note that Jan's anger/fear/bigotry is directed at the Russians.

See, most people are still far more scared of Commies than of those upright defenders of Traditional British Values, your friends and mine, the National Front. And this could be crucial. Right at this moment, the Tories are busily, and probably totally innocently, creating the ideal climate in which the Front can flourish. Ever-increasing unemployment, ever-increasing prices, ever-decreasing social services; people just won't take it for too long. And most of them would prefer to beat the shit out of the nearest black guy with a job than join up with any 'Commies' (this means almost anyone out to achieve the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people). And don't forget what a mess the Labour Party is in. People will look for a street-level movement, promising improvements (a return to the golden age of Traditional British Values, anyone?) and Tyndall and Webster should know enough of the career of their man Adolf to exploit them in their rise to power, ably assisted by a large section of the cops and those British Movement cretins who've cut their teeth beating up non-skins at Madness gigs. Once they're in, we're finished.

Anyway, cheer up — the rise of the Front could be rudely curtailed by the Tories blowing us all up with their new nuclear reactor.

Happy '80s.
A wet liberal (small 'l'), Southampton.

So Jamie Reid thinks that the music industry is oppressive and just in it for the money. Therefore he thinks it right to use the Swastika design to represent said industry. All I can say, Mr Reid, is when was the last time the music industry killed 60,000 British, 360,000 French, 7,700,000 Russians, 90,000 Belgiums, 190,000 Dutch, 80,000 Greeks, 1,300,000 Yugoslavians, 330,000 Czechs and 5,300,000 Poles?

These figures are civilian deaths only and include the Jews who died.

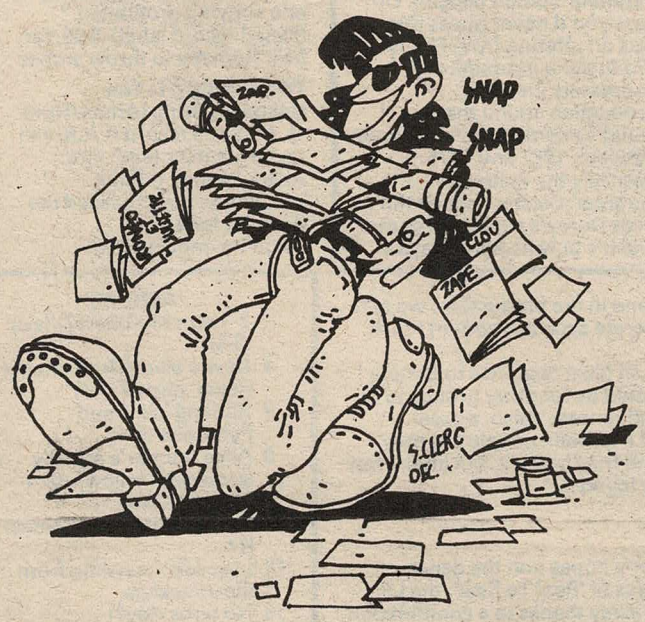
Mr Reid, you try to trivialise by using this filthy design and no amount of pseudointellectual crap that you write can disguise the fact that you have made money out of the very organisation you pretend to hate.
Andy Worthington, Ebbw Vale, Gwent.

Having read both Richard Branson and Jamie Reid's replies to my Sid Vicious review I conclude that Branson is backpedalling and desperately trying to defend the hideous bollock he dropped, and that Reid is a precious, misunderstood artist who apparently thinks that the recipients of his little bit of genius are the same sort of articulate, thoughtful, dry and stunningly perceptive human being that he so obviously is.

The swastika, no matter how you decorate it and however much dope you smoke, remains the swastika. And those two are dwarves in its disgusting shadow.
Danski

They are not digging up Norfolk to make silos for cruise missiles. Cruise missiles do not have silos, they are launched from subs, aircraft, mobile (truck) launchers or not launched at all. They are very likely to be digging up West Germany for some other missile but Norfolk is right out.
Your Defence Correspondent.
P.S. Nice piece on *Apocalypse Now.*
(a) You're quite right and we realised the boob too late; (b) Mr Coppola liked it, too (see *T-Zers*) — M.S.

This ain't rock'n'roll



. . . this is GPO genocide

Monty Smith gets to grips with the '80s — the heat goes on.

"The Clash are the kind of garage band who should be speedily returned to their garage — preferably with the motor running." (Charles Shaar Murray, March '77).

"With groups like The Clash on the case, rock and roll ain't in the cultural dumper. This is the one." (Charles Shaar Murray, December '79).

"All journalists are swine." (Joe Strummer, September '77).

Right first time, Joe.
Ziggy, Portland, Dorset.
Happy New Year, Senhor Stardust. The first quote in question is actually from some time in '76. The Clash have changed a good deal since then and so have I. — CSM.

Why don't you admit it? The new Clash LP is watered-down twaddle! There were more than a few warning tummy rumbles on 'Give 'Em Enough Rope' but 'London Calling' is like sloppy diarrhoea compared to the solid, healthy turd plopping with a resounding splash into the bowl of modern music which was their first LP.

I'm not one of those "The world ended when the Pistols split up" nurds, and obviously nobody with any sense wants The Clash to repeat 'White Riot' and 'Janie Jones' ad nauseam but there are plenty of more imaginative ways of broadening your musical horizons than digging up old rockabilly chesnuts and running through endless re-treads of macho warrior-chic nursery rhymes.

Of course, everybody knows that the *NME*-Clash situation is just one big mutual admiration society (30-page Paul Morley tributes, Lowry and Smith doing the visuals for the new LP, embarrassing Joe Strummer guest 'journalist' spots, droolingly sycophantic LP reviews — "marvellously ambiguous", Good God! — mindless glowing live reviews etc.) but I can't believe, as *NME* would apparently have me, that everybody there is wild about them.

Isn't there even one person in the whole place who has the courage to stand up and say, "I don't like The Clash much anymore." Or are you all afraid of losing some hip friends, being called up-cool, and not getting a free copy of their next LP?
Mick Dwyer, Brighton, Sussex.
I don't like The Clash much anymore. Never did. — M.S.

Don't blame me, I didn't vote Strummer.
Pab, Walsall.

Mrs Thatcher wanted a return to the old values — well done Clash!
Zeno Sparklet, Walsworth, N. Herts.

So Joe Jackson aligns himself with The Clash, rather than Bram Tchaikovsky or The Records, who he describes as the most boring group he's ever heard.

Whilst The Clash remain true to their ideals and therefore meet with resistance from many US Radio Stations, Joe, on the other hand, woos his followers with a selection of easy-on-the-ear Steve Miller rewrites. But it's different for Joe, whose rhesus-like stage posturing and token aggression clearly place him in the vanguard of British 'new wave'.

The Records had the honour of opening for the Desmond Morris of pop at several US venues this year, and were obliged to play in front of the man's British-invasion-style Union Jack backdrop. Fortunately this appendage did not inhibit the audience in their appreciation of The Records set, quite as much as Desmond's deft use of the melodica ("the instrument of the '80s") in his.

Have a go, Joe!
Will Birch and John Wicks, The Records (currently a trio).

I was sitting in bed having breakfast and reading *Roy Of The Rovers,* the world's greatest soccer magazine, when my wife, Penny, who was sitting next to me, gave a tremendous scream. "AAAAAARGH!" She was reading *NME* at the time and for a moment I thought that Ruby Murray was no longer at the top of the Hit Parade or that she had read something equally as serious.

Alas, she had read your review by Monty Smith of the film *Yesterday's Hero.* In the review, it said: "As the first ever feature about a football star, it is an unmitigated disaster and about as authentic as Roy of the Rovers. . ." How dare you!

In this, my Silver Jubilee year, my adventures are so authentic that we seem to lose more matches than we win. I have got married! I have become a father! I have become player-manager of Melchester Rovers! I have managed England! I have played football with Malcolm Macdonald and Trevor Francis! I am nagged by my wife! How authentic can you get?

If Monty Smith wants to apologise, I will let him have two tickets for Melchester's next home game. Then he will really see how authentic we are.
Roy Race, Player Manager, Melchester Rovers F.C.

How come your "double whoppa" Xmas edition, costing 40p, contained only 80 pages, wheras the previous edition, costing only 20p, had 64 pages? Does it cost twice as much for an extra 16 pages? I demand a 20p refund.
T.S.B., Sittingbourne, Kent.
Did you notice how few ads graced those 80 pages? Obviously not — M.S.

George Orwell is good on dates. He wanted to call his novel *1948* but the publisher wouldn't let him.
Eric Blair and Stan Wells, Cleveland, Tyneside.

I was going to ensure that 1980 would make 1984 look like 1967 but Maggie beat me to it.
Ged, Sheffield (but moving to Preston)

If someone in *Gasbag* reckons 'Complex' is 'Another Tubular Bell Part 2', what about 'Diamond Smiles', the main melody of which is obviously 'Evita'.

"Oh, what a rip-off Oh, what a. . ."
The Melody Spotter, Boomtown, Essex.

Dear Max, thank you for your lovely three page feature on Tim Buckley. You drew a fair portrait of someone near and dear. It's nice to know that he hasn't been completely forgotten and that there are still a few people who enjoy his music.
David Buckley, The Barracudas.
Aaaaaaaaah. — M.S.

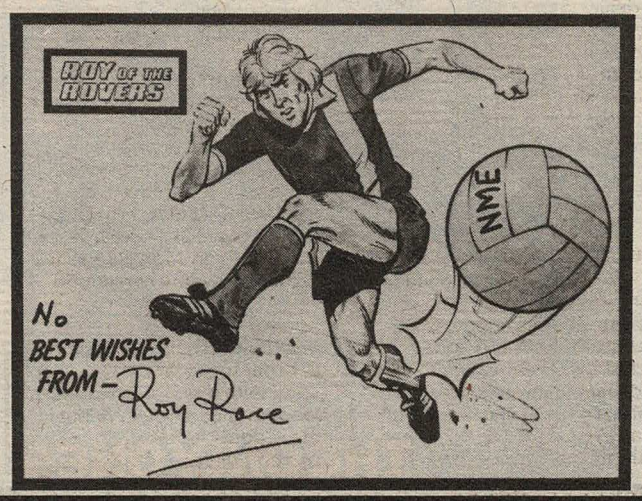
Re: the mention of the song 'Subway Surfing' in *Live!* In 1978 Barracuda leader Jeremy Gluck interviewed me while I was a member of The Diodes. I mentioned to him a game I played as a kid — subway surfing — and that I planned to write a song about it. Now I find he has ripped off the idea and tried to sell it as his own. Well, just add this blemish to The Barracudas' questionable reputation.
John Hamilton, Toronto, Canada
Oooooooooh. — M.S.

Shouldn't Dylan's Bozo Songbook piece have been called 'I Fought The Lord (And The Lord Won)'?
Andie, Hull

I was wondering whether to see *Star Trek* until I discovered that the female crew wear trousers and not those sexy mini skirts. I will not spend my hard-earned money on watching a bald-headed lady.
Paul Monaghan, London SE1

We think Pink Floyd are a bunch of bricks. And we can't spell — we don't need no education.
The Class of '79
And we think Roger Waters is a bit of a cult. — M.S.

I got a letter printed in *NME* about two years ago and you spelt my name wrong. This time get a decent typist you bastards.
John Smith
Sorry about that, Jon. — M. SNIPH



T-ZERS

CRAWLING from the usual seasonal wreckage, pausing only to sharpen its wits on a handy mug, *T-Zers* swings out of stupefaction and back into action . .

Watching the bubbles fizz in the mug brings to *T-Zers'* normally lucid mind something of the carefree social whirl that took place as we broke up for Crimble. It was party-a-gogo, cats, commencing with *NME*'s annual thank-you to all the people who put up with our fickle pot-shots during the year, which took place in London's chic, downmarket Club 21 and drew such notables as **Sore Throat,** members of **Generation X, Mikey Dread, The Clash,** one or two **Blondies, Tom Robinson, Neville Smith** of **The Specials, Kosmo Vinyl, The Inmates,** and the **Gang Of Four,** as well as the typical gaggle of nervous, excitable hacks who seem to turn up every year. Entertainment was in the hands of **The Little Roosters,** who later revealed that they were an R'n'B band, thus providing a fitting end to the decade . . .

Twenty-four hours on *T-Zers* found itself in the midst of an extravagant Xmas bash in Leicester Square thrown by Chrysalis Records to welcome **Blondie** over for their tour. **The Little Roosters** (again) and **The Beat** supplied the backdrop for countless droves of music-biz nonentities and a handful of personalities to sashay back and forth between the free drinks and free food tables. **Hugh Cornwell** was there, so were **The Damned, B A Robertson, Kosmo Vinyl, Ian Page** (who, when told of his neck and neck running with **Gary Numan** in the NME Readers Poll Creep Of The Year stakes, opined "I must be doing something right!") and various members of **The Banshees** who had a brief and undignified exchange of views with various ex-members of the **The Banshees** . . .

Just up the road at Air Studios *another* Chrysalis party was in full swing, this one allowing execs the chance to rub specially-tailored cheque book pockets with **Blondie** without rabble about to spoil the sanctity of the occasion. **Debbie Harry** wore red, and rumoured new Chrysalis signing **The Body Snatchers** played. A lecherous over-grown Rude Boy reports that the *idea* of an all girl seven-piece ska/reggae band is as yet more appealing than the actuality . . .

Superior merriment was to be had at the party of Stiff Records' 'chairman' **Paul Conroy** at Clapham's *demi-monde* 101 Club, where a gang of ageing mods called **The Q-Tips** dusted off a number of '60s soul classics and left not a dry eye in the house. Among those present were a cheery **Jake Riviera, Lene Lovich, Kosmo Vinyl** and a bunch of other Stiffs . . .

Lesseenow, what else happened in the season of conspicuous consumption? **The Clash** played some secret dates on Xmas day and Boxing day at The Acklam Hall (see *Thrills*), and **Mick Jones' Gran** was there. For the past three weeks a certain lady has been going into Hammersmith's Flyover record emporium and scoring herself copies of 'London Calling'. Now we can tell — it was Mick's Gran, the very same. "Michael was such a nice boy before he became a punk," she informed the incredulous store-hands . . .

The day after their secret gigs **The Clash** turned up as 'mystery guest' at **Ian Dury's** Hammersmith Odeon benefit for **the people of Kampuchea,** part of a four night stint whose 'special one-off' nature caused the spectre of 'jamming' to rear its long-forgotten head. *(Ed's note: 'Jamming' refers to the old hippy custom whereby a number of top stars get together to see who can do the least damage to their reputation).* **Mick Jones, Joe Strummer** and **Dennis Bovelle** jammed with **The Blockheads** on Thursday; on Saturday **Robert Plant** lent his castrata to **Rockpile's** reading of 'Little Sister' as curtain-raiser to **Macca**'s all-star shambles called the Rockestra and featuring (pause for breath here please) **Robert Plant, John Paul Jones, John Bonham, Kenny Jones, Ronnie Lane, Pete Townsend, Gary Brooker, Tony Ashton, Bruce Thomas, Dave Edmunds** and others too insignificant to mention. They performed the 'Rockestra Theme' (twice), 'Lucille' and 'Let It Be' while in the audience **Mick Fleetwood** and **Chrissie Hynde** successfully resisted the urge to get up and join them. Incidentally, Chrissie, who put in a surprise appearance with her band on Friday, has been deemed a bad influence on **The Specials** ever since she used one of their cars for a spot of creative driving . . .

DAVID Bowie saw out his decade with two videos (what else?), celebrating ten years with a successful identity crisis. A top US TV rock show screened in mid-December versions of 'John, I'm Only Dancing' and 'Man Who Sold The World' with the old glamourpuss stepping out again in drag, and Kenny Everett's New Year's Eve video show featured a stylish re-working of 'Space Oddity' rendered by an ageing Ziggy and cut with snatches of Thomas Jerome Newton / Major Tom taking a space flight in someone's kitchen . . .

Also from the States comes the perfect Xmas gift for **Peter Frampton, Steve Harley** and **Kiss.** A studio drummer from L.A. called **Rob Rozelle** has patented 'The Clapper', an applause simulator for those 'scant' gigs. Our man boasts that "with enough clappers a crowd of twenty can sound like a full house!" A recent caller to *T-Zers* informed us that **The Clash** have a dozen on order for their 1981 tour along with dry ice, luminous neck bangles and lasers but this is doubtful *(Not to mention bitchy — Ed)* . . .

Pic: Justin Thomas

Pete: "I never did like The Beatles." Paul: "Oh I don't know I quite liked some of their stuff meself."

Pic: Kate Simon.

Patti: "Hey why don't I do a straight version of 'I'm Dreaming Of A White Christmas'?" Todd: "Uh oh, she means it."

One of the world's forgotten men, **Noel Redding** *(Who? — Ed)* is alive and starving to death in Ireland. Mr Redding — the instigator of the now legendary festival — is currently chasing up an estimated 1.5 million pounds that he claims is owed to him from the days of **The Jimi Hendrix Experience** *(The What? — Ed).* Moreover **Noel's girlfriend** is prone to sleeping with a shotgun because of the alleged threats to her fella's life since he began querying his royalties . . .

Talking of which, **Modest Bob Geldof** gave a surprisingly modest **Rats**-life-story rap on Radio One on Boxing Day. The chief Rat is not entirely pleased with the glamour boy **Mick'n'Bianca** type treatment he and his mate have been getting in the gossip columns recently and claims that "watching the telly in a modest flat on Clapham Common eating our Mr Kipling cakes" is nearer the true life style of himself and glamorous *Retard Mirror* hackette **Paula** 'It's hot in here' **Yates.** Dublin rock's follow-up to **Brendan Behan** also hotly denied the charge by MC **Paul Gambathingy** that he was "obsessed with death" in his songs . . .

While **The Slits** and others including faster-than-the-rest *nouvelle vague* film maker **Don Letts** left London for New York and a New Year's Eve date at Anglophiliac club Hurrah's, ex-Slits, **Raincoats** drummer **Palm Olive** departed for India to study tabla playing in anticipation of the hippie revival . . .

Those loathsome infantile berks, **Kiss,** are being sought by the German Social Democratic Party in order for some sort of prosecution to take place. They are charged with wilfully promoting the vile 'SS' insignia in their stupid logo (it sez here!). **Siouxsie Sioux, Steve Stills, Stephen Sondheim** and **Sam The Sham** are currently at gate 17 awaiting departure . . .

As you may have read last ish, Polydor Press Office awarded **Nick,** uh, **Kent** a hard won £5 book token for being the World's Most Disorganised Person. Fact: Nick has now lost the book token! Does this mean that he's eligible for next year's? . . .

More on our wonderful scribes: **Francis Coppola,** director of *Apocalypse Now,* spoke thusly to a gathering of media types (including some of the nation's foremost 'film critics') at his London hotel: "This is the best — not one of the best — the *best* review of my picture, because the man who wrote it had studied my film and understood perfectly what I was saying." The review and the writer in question? *NME's,* natch, by the estimable **Angus MacKinnon,** who hopes shortly to turn his review into a major motion picture . . .

Later that same week a certain dimly-remembered figure was seen queueing for the evening performance of *Apocalypse Now* in Shaftesbury Avenue. Wearing a tweed coat and a sheepish look was none other than **Malcolm McLaren,** who vanished before the end of the film and thereby thwarted the *T-Zer* who was going to invite him to come back and stick his spoke in for the '80s . . .

Ahh, the '80s . . . Gazing out of the window *T-Zers* foresees many things: upheavals, deaths, revolutions, counter-revolutions, video, fads. But we're going to really stick our neck out now and predict that the coming years will bring more of the same and that records won't get any cheaper.

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BETTER BADGES

MAIL ORDER TOP TEN

1	(1)	Madness 'Two Tone'	20p
2	(2)	Police 'A&M'	20p
3	(7)	The Jam 'Union Jack'	20p
4	(6)	The Specials 'AKA'	20p
5	(9)	Eton Rifles	20p
6	(4)	The Jam Tubestation	20p
7	(5)	Setting Sons	20p
8	(8)	All Mod Cons	20p
9	(3)	The Selecter	20p
10	(10)	The Jam B/W	20p

20p. Buzzcocks Green/Red (not green/blue), Poison Girls, Lora Logic, Dangerous Girls, We are all Prostitutes, Everyone has their Price, On my Radio, The Beat, Madness Big M, Ants Whitesox, Hybrid Kids, Pop Aural, The 80's, Brian Saves, Animal Lib Otter, Badger, Kangaroo, Elephant, U.K. Decoy, Wire 154, Mike Malignant & the Parasites, English Subtitles, A Certain Ratio, Dodgems, Iggy Pop Solder, Spizz Capt Kirk, London PX, Purple Hearts, The Cure.
25p. Mother Gong, King Sounds, Black Slate, Killing Joke.

Add 10p P&P Free list

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Harvey's familiar vivid style of story-telling dominates. . . .

The album is a deceptive achievement for Alex Harvey — more prepared and subtle than his previous works, less rock 'n' roll, more interpretation and careful emotion. His writing still has bravado, but he seems wiser and more reflective now. Another pair of songs of the calibre of "Wait For Me Mama" and "The Whalers" to replace the album's two oddballs, and Harvey would have had a near-faultless vindication of his former status. —

John Orme, M.M.

Alex Harvey delivers enough on this record to make me hope that someone from the RCA office will call right off and tell me where and when I can rectify my error in never having seen him onstage.

Sandy Robertson, Sounds.

ALEX HARVEY

& THE NEW BAND

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